Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

Vol. 32, Issue 1
JANUARY 2024

Old Guys Rule

Great Notion turns page to another season at stud

Discover the rewards of commercial breeding

IT STARTS WITH A GOOD YOUNG MARE BRED TO A TOP KENTUCKY STALLION

Coglianese Photo

Brittan Walls

Her name is TRUANCY. She may be the fastest filly we've ever bought. She ran a 7 Thoromanager winning a $88,000 Maiden Special Weight (above) at Saratoga in her second start.

Trained by Barclay Tagg, 3YO TRUANCY ran 8, 7, 6, and 7 Thoromanager numbers in her first 4 starts. She will be bred to a fashionable Kentucky stallion in 2024, to produce a Maryland-bred foal in 2025.

16Oct 22	6 AQU	9.0	ft	S	3↟ Oc 45 nw2$x*	90k	8	117	127	**98**	1:52.46	109	123	63	**97**	7	2	21	21	11	2½
15Sep 22	9 AQU	8.0	ft	S f	3↟ Alw nw1$x/nw2	85k	9	137	137	**100**	1:38.57	133	135	66	**100**	6	5	2½	2½	12½	13
31Jul 22	1 SAR	7.0	ft	S f	3↟ MSW	88k	7	148	142	**97**	1:24.19	148	142	41	**96**	7	2	1hd	1hd	12½	13½
16Jun 22	1 BEL	6.5	ft	S f	3↟ MSW	75k	6	129	116	**101**	1:16.81	121	114	67	**92**	8	2	21	2½	22	23¾

Trained by - Barclay Tagg Owner - Eric Dattner

COUNTRY LIFE & MERRYLAND
From Beginning to Winning

TRUANCY cost $55,000 at the 2023 Fasig-Tipton December Mixed Sale. At NO MARKUP, we are forming a 10-share TRUANCY LLC at $5,500 per share. Visit CountryLifeFarm.com for details.

Maryland's Oldest Thoroughbred Farm
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www.countrylifefarm.com
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2024

MIDLANTIC TWO-YEAR-OLD SALES DATES

Midlantic May Two-Year-Olds in Training
Entries close: February 5

May 20 - 21
(Under Tack Show: May 14-16)

Midlantic June Two-Year-Olds in Training
Entries close: May 1

June 26
(Under Tack Show: June 24)

**Dates subject to change*

MIDLANTIC MAY 2YOS IN TRAINING
2023 SALE TOPPER

$1,000,000

ARROGATE - TWIXY FILLY
CONSIGNOR: HARTLEY/DE RENZO THOROUGHBREDS
BUYER: KERRI RADCLIFFE

MIDLANTIC JUNE 2YOS IN TRAINING
2023 SALE TOPPER

$500,000

KANTHAROS - LA TITINA FILLY
CONSIGNOR: CRANE THOROUGHBRED SERVICES
BUYER: STEVEN W YOUNG

Fasig-Tipton
fasigtipton.com

Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

— Set List —

Regional stallions ready for 2024 season

New Jersey gets some new names. A Preakness winner comes to Pennsylvania. West Virginia adds a graded stakes winner by Into Mischief. Blofeld remains popular in Maryland as bigger farm rosters stand pat. By Joe Clancy. Page 24

Marylander rides to Godolphin award

Dominick Merritt grew up in Baltimore and Hereford, Md., with little to no horse background and parlayed it into a job with Hall of Fame trainer Todd Pletcher and the 2023 Godolphin Thoroughbred Industry Employee Awards newcomer prize. By Tom Law. Page 34

Mixed results in December

A weaker draft of racehorses pushed down returns at Fasig-Tipton Midlantic's winter mixed sale in December as a Ghostzapper weanling led the way at $82,000. By John Piassek. Page 40

From North Carolina with Hope

One of just six registered Thoroughbreds foaled in North Carolina in 2020, Hartful Hope won four races in 2023 and delighted people at every stop. By Alicia Hughes. Page 48

Steeplechase Times: That's a wrap

Taking a look at the 2023 National Steeplechase Association season, by the numbers; timber veteran Schoodic puts together championship season at age 13. By Sean Clancy. Page 52

Remembering Leon Blusiewicz

Talented horses, big bets, tall tales and crabcakes create quite a legacy for the trainer who died in November at 92. By Vinnie Perrone. Page 60

On our cover: Still the dean at age 24, Maryland's Great Notion leads the Mid-Atlantic stallion roster after topping $5 million in progeny earnings for 2023. *Photo by Barbara Livingston.*

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Maryland Million Stallion Nominations Deadline

JANUARY 31, 2024

Questions? Call us at 410-252-2100 MarylandMillion.com

MARYLAND MILLION NOMINATIONS – STALLIONS FOR 2024

Only stallions standing the upcoming breeding season in Maryland are eligible to be nominated to this program. The total nomination fee as reported on this form should equal the advertised stud fee or, if not advertised, the prevailing fee paid by third parties. Under no circumstances shall the nomination fee be less than $500 or greater than $20,000, regardless of stud fee. Read carefully all terms and conditions at MarylandMillion.com before nominating any stallion.

Stallion name:

_____

2024 Stud Fee:

_____

PAYMENT OPTION 1: Pay full stud fee less 10% discount
Due 1/31/24: _____

PAYMENT OPTION 2: Full fee in two payments
Due 1/31/24 _____ *Due 7/31/24** _____
**Balances not paid by July 31 will be subject to a ten (10) percent late charge.*

Stallion Ownership Record

Tax Identification Number (TIN) used on this stallion:
❑ S.S.# _____
or
❑ I.D.# _____
Exact name of the person or business on record with Internal Revenue Service/Social Security Administration for this TIN:

_____

Maryland farm name where stallion will stand:

_____

Nominator Record

Check one: ❑ Owner ❑ Syndicate manager ❑ Authorized

_____
Name of individual signing this form (please print)

_____
Address

_____
Phone E-mail

_____
Signature (This form must be signed for awards to be paid)

Payment method: ❑ Payment enclosed or

❑ VISA ❑ MASTERCARD Exp. date __ __/__ __ Card no. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Photocopies of this form may be used for additional stallions. However, the nominator agrees, by signing, to accept the terms and conditions printed on the back of the original version. If no terms and conditions are printed on the back of this form, the nominator is advised to contact the Maryland Million office for a copy of such terms and conditions before signing the front.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Register your Maryland stallion for the 2024 MARYLAND-BRED RACE FUND PROGRAM

DON'T MISS A BONUS!

If your stallion has offspring of racing age, make sure you register him for the Maryland Fund program! STALLIONS MUST BE REGISTERED EVERY YEAR to be eligible to receive stallion bonuses. Registration fee is $250.

Call the MHBA office at (410) 252-2100 x129 or visit www.marylandthoroughbred.com.

Maryland Stallion Season Auction

Benefiting

THE Maryland Horse FOUNDATION

January 3-7, 2024

Barbados
Blofeld
Bourbon Courage
Cupid
Divining Rod
Friesan Fire
Galawi (IRE)
Golden Lad
Holy Boss
Hoppertunity
Irish War Cry
Kobe's Back
Long On Value
Long River
Madefromlucky
Mosler
Uncle Lino

Sign Up & Bid at MarylandHorse.com

Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

Volume 32, Issue 1

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PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN EQUINE MEDIA

BLOFELD

His numbers speak volumes

Top FIVE 3rd-Crop Sire in North America with

$43,471 average earnings

Behind GUN RUNNER, Classic Empire and Practical Joke

Second-leading 3rd-Crop Sire in North America with

13.5% Black-type horses

to GUN RUNNER

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8
THE
SHAKER
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KEENELAND

Post Time

IT'S OFFICIAL. As reported in the December edition, Pennsylvania-bred Caravel will start her broodmare career in 2024 and has a date with Triple Crown winner Justify. Bred by Lizzie Merryman, the daughter of Mizzen Mast won 15 of 26 career starts, topped by Grade 1 scores in the 2022 Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint and 2023 Jaipur, and earned $1,983,327. *Candice Chavez/Eclipse Sportswire*

Say It Again

"It's a long story. It's a long story. Number one was when my father took me to see Seabiscuit-War Admiral. I got hooked. I love the game, especially this place, this is the holy place."
Trainer Leon Blusiewicz, at Saratoga in 2010, on how he got into racing; he died in November at 92

"I'll tell you what, that horse is going to have something to say about the Belmont. He can run and he's got the pedigree, too."
Blusiewicz, after Tonalist won the Peter Pan Stakes in 2014; four weeks later he won the Belmont to help deny California Chrome the Triple Crown

"Look at that, it's like an elephant stepped on it."
Blusiewicz, holding up his money clip after a tough day at the windows in 2014

"I often wonder if they chat away in there. The others have to know about him. He's the man."
Northview Stallion Station's Paul O'Loughlin, about the region's leading sire Great Notion (who turned 24 this year)

"That's better than last year, and there's still time."
Retired trainer J.B. Secor, after being told by Santa Claus that he was 17 points off the "nice" list at the Maryland Horse Breeders Association open house Dec. 15

"It's a labor of love and concern. I don't want to say frustration. I like the animals. You have a nice horse, you have hope. I like the racing part of it to see how you do. 'Why did we lose? Why did we win?' "
Dr. Bill Solomon, on life in the horse business

Uncertainty Rules

Questions about the future of Maryland racing touch all aspects of the industry, even stallions.

Northview Stallion Station's Paul O'Loughlin: "It's got to have an effect. How do you promote horses of any kind or promote people to breed with questions like that?"

Atlanta Hall Farm's Gary Murray: "We can't control what happens with racing, but we're hoping it works out and gets resolved soon enough. That will be important for our business for sure."

Murmur Farm's Audrey Murray: "We have some good people working on it and I trust that it will get resolved. We have to believe that. The purses are strong, the opportunities are there. We're looking forward, not back."

Names of the Month

By Its Absence. Robert Reidy's 3-year-old gelding, bred in Maryland by Larry Johnson, is out of Conspicuous. The Speightster gelding won at Laurel Park in November and December.

Oui Madame. The 6-year-old mare, bred in Pennsylvania by Richard Simoff, is out of Yes My Lady.

Bonnie Parker. The 2-year-old Pennsylvania-bred filly, named for half of the Bonnie and Clyde outlaw duo of the 1930s, is by World of Trouble. She races for co-breeder Main Line Stable and trainer John Servis.

Better Your Odds with a Pin Oak Lane Grade 1 Stallion

Maclean's Music–Quick Temper, by A.P. Indy

CLOUD COMPUTING

Top son of Maclean's Music
Grade 1 Preakness winner

Leading 2023 Second-crop sire in Mid-Atlantic **by earnings** ($2,304,429), **winners** (43), **black-type winners** (3), **black-type runners** (6). FOUR black-type winners in two crops to run, 12 black-type earners total.

$3,500 LFSN; $3,000 for 2 mares; $2,500 for 3 or more mares to any Pin Oak Lane stallion. Registered Pennsylvania stallion

Hard Spun–Moyne Abbey, by Charismaticy

WICKED STRONG

Grade 1 winner of $1.99 Million
HARD SPUN's best son at stud

$13 million in lifetime progeny earnings; 39 $100,000+ earners. Sire of **20 black-type horses** including G2 winner **BROOKLYN STRONG** ($307,188), G2 **WICKED CRANE,** G3 **WICKED RUNNER**, etc.

$3,500 LFSN; $3,000 for 2 mares; $2,500 for 3 or more mares to any Pin Oak Lane stallion. Registered Pennsylvania stallion

Speightstown–Green Room, by Theatrical (Ire)

LORD SHANAKILL

Grade 1 winner of $908,475
By sires of sires SPEIGHTSTOWN

Sire of 15 stakes horses, including G1 winner **MY DREAM BOAT** ($1,002,496). A precocious sprint turf specialist racing in England and France, winning from 6 fur. to 1 mile with graded wins at 2, 3 and 4.

$2,500 LFSN; $2,000 for 2 mares; $1,500 for 3 or more mares to any Pin Oak Lane stallion. Registered Pennsylvania stallion

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Milestones

Delayed:

To Jan. 5 from Dec. 1, 2023, a report from the Maryland Racetrack Operating Authority to the state's General Assembly on the future of racing in the state. Created last year to gather information from stakeholders and author a report for state legislators, the authority held several meetings where breeders, horsemen, Maryland Jockey Club officials and others shared insight and offered viewpoints. Generally, a model in Maryland involves one primary racetrack (most likely a rebuilt Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore) and a primary training center (also a new facility). Other issues such as racing dates, slot-machine revenue division, track ownership and a business model (for-profit or non-profit) will be part of the report, with the authority expected to make recommendations for legislators.

Scheduled:

After a six-year hiatus, the Colonial Cup Races at Springdale Race Course in Camden, S.C. Founded in 1970, the Colonial Cup featured the first $100,000 race in North American steeplechase history and helped decide championships as a major autumn target for top-level horses from the United States and abroad. For budgetary reasons, the meet did not happen from 2018-23 as organizers focused on the spring Carolina Cup Races over the same course. The meet returns Sunday, Nov. 17 and will (barring a schedule change) share the final weekend of the National Steeplechase Association's 2024 season with the nearby Aiken Fall Races. Presented by new sponsor Mullikin Law, the featured Marion du Pont Scott Colonial Cup will be a $150,000 Grade 1 at 2 ¾ miles. It was last run, as a spring stakes at the Carolina Cup meet, in 2018. Previous winners of the race include Hall of Famers Café Prince, Zaccio, Flatterer, Lonesome Glory, McDynamo and Good Night Shirt. Scott founded the race in 1970, which attracted several international runners, to help limit the impact of the removal of most American jump racing from the New York tracks. For more, see carolinacup.org.

Celebrated:

Its 90th anniversary, West Virginia's Charles Town racetrack, Saturday, Dec. 2. The Shenandoah Valley Jockey Club carded seven races as part of its 20-day winter meeting. Total purses on the day – Dec. 2, 1933 – were $2,400. The anniversary card Dec. 2, 2023, honored the 1933 Opening Day winners Mint Mission (who took the opener, a $400 maiden race for 2-year-olds), Oral, Miss Morocco, Luck In, Light Breeze, Royal Lassie and The Doctor.

Selected:

As the newest members of the National Museum of Racing's Joe Hirsch Media Roll of Honor, writers

Dick Jerardi

Dick Jerardi, Paul Moran, and John L. Hervey. Jerardi grew up in Baltimore and graduated from the University of Maryland with a journalism degree and a minor in history. He attended his first Preakness in 1973 and frequented the betting windows at Pimlico, Bowie, Laurel, and Timonium almost daily from 1977 to early 1985. He began authoring freelance articles about racing for the *Baltimore News American* and was the racing writer for *Sports First*, a Baltimore paper dedicated exclusively to sports that lasted just a year beginning in 1983. In February 1985, he was hired as the racing writer for the *Philadelphia Daily News* and covered every Triple Crown race from 1987 through 2017 and nearly every Breeders' Cup during the same period. He also wrote about college basketball, football and baseball, as well as the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona. Jerardi's favorite experiences in racing were from 2004 through 2006, when three horses with Philadelphia-area connections – Smarty Jones, Afleet

Anchor and Hope Farm

SPEED. TALENT. SOUNDNESS.
WHERE RACEHORSES BECOME SIRES.

BOURBON COURAGE

Lion Heart–Shine Forth, by Carson City

61% winners/starters • $63,627 AE/starter

G2-winning, multiple G1-placed millionaire. Sire of G2 winner **DOUBLE CROWN** ($778,185), **FORTHELUVOFBOURBON** ($573,120), **MALIBU MOONSHINE** (3 wins in 6 starts, $173,400), **RAGING WHISKEY** (G3-placed), etc. 11 total black-type earners. $2,500 LFSN, BC & MM

HOLY BOSS

Street Boss–Holy Grace, by Holy Bull

VERSATILE RUNNERS: STAKES WINNERS LONG & SPRINTING ON DIRT AND TURF

Sire of MG3 **FIOLO BOSS** (in Argentina), **VANCE SCHOLARS** ($279,590), **BOSSERATI, Al Loves Josie** ($391,198), **Holy Synchronicity**, **Sparkle Sprinkle**, **My Boss, Sol Y Boss** (G2-placed in Arg). Blistering fast Saratoga G2 winner & MG1-placed. 100+ Beyers in the G1 Breeders' Cup Sprint, G1 Vanderbilt, G1 King's Bishop, etc. Earned $771,527. $2,500 LFSN, BC & MM

LONG RIVER

A.P. Indy–Round Pond, by Awesome Again

G3 STAKES-PLACED WINNER IN FIRST CROP

13 winners from 23 starters including G3 stakes-placed **Azul Por Siempre** (in Chile). Lasix-free G1 winner with 124 Equibase dirt speed figure (highest of any stallion in MD). Multiple SW, 3-times graded stakes-placed, including G1 Jockey Club Gold Cup. Multiple 100+ Beyers. $1,500 LFSN, BC & MM

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Milestones

Alex and Barbaro – won five Triple Crown races. In 2006, Jerardi won the Eclipse Award for his series on Barbaro. He has won the Red Smith Award for Kentucky Derby coverage five times and is a three-time winner of the Joe Hirsch Award for best Breeders' Cup story. He was honored for the best Preakness story in 2004. In 2007, Jerardi was chosen by the National Turf Writers and Broadcasters as the winner of the Walter Haight Award for career excellence. He co-hosts *Let's Go Racing*, a 30-minute weekly horse racing television show that has been on the air in the Philadelphia market for more than 30 years (1992 to present). Moran (1947-2013) was born in Buffalo, N.Y., and graduated from the University at Buffalo. He served in Vietnam and the Middle East as a sergeant in the Air Force before beginning a distinguished career in sports journalism, primarily as a racing writer. Moran wrote about a variety of sports for the *Tonawanda News* near his hometown. He covered his first Triple Crown races in 1973 and continued to cover the series for the next 35 years. Moran worked for the Fort Lauderdale *Sun Sentinel* from 1975-85 then joined the staff at *Newsday* on Long Island, N.Y., where he worked until 2008. Moran won two Eclipse Awards while at *Newsday*. After a three-year battle with cancer, Moran died in November 2013. The following summer, a group of friends and colleagues scattered his ashes in the Saratoga Race Course infield near the grave of Go for Wand, per Moran's wishes. Hervey (1870-1947), a native of Jefferson, Ohio, was described by *The Thoroughbred of California* as "the dean of American turf journalists." Raised in a horseman's family, Hervey developed a considerable knowledge of breeding. While a teenager, Hervey put that knowledge to good use when hired by William Fasig to work in his sales organization – the Tipton Company of Cleveland, later becoming the Fasig-Tipton Company – and soon he was writing articles for a variety of turf journals. Hervey became editor of *The Trotting Horse* in 1892. He also provided racing coverage for the *Chicago Tribune* in the 1890s and became one of *Daily Racing Form*'s first contributors. In 1912, Hervey became editor for *The Thoroughbred Record*. It was during this period that Hervey, who used the pen name "Salvator" in honor of the Hall of Fame racehorse, became widely regarded as one of America's foremost authorities on racing and breeding. Other publications Hervey wrote for included *The Blood-Horse, Breeder and Sportsman, The Harness Horse, Hoof Beats*, and *The Thoroughbred of California*, among others.

Go Figure

19 Years in age difference between 2024 regional stallions Great Notion (24) and My Prankster (5).

24 Website browser tabs open on editor Joe Clancy's computer while writing the stallion feature for this edition.

2 Maryland-bred hurdle winners for Country Life Farm stallions at the Montpelier meet in November. Divining Rod 4-year-old gelding Icandothat, racing for his breeder Vivian Rall, scored in a maiden claimer and two races later 5-year-old Mosler gelding Casamo, racing for his breeder South Branch Equine, won a maiden special weight. Sean McDermott trained and rode both.

4,000 Horses accepted through the Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association's Turning for Home retirement program after 7-year-old mare Mrs. Crews was retired by trainer Everton Smith in November. Mrs. Crews started 81 times, winning eight and placing an additional 19 times for a variety of connections. The Florida-bred earned $233,063. She was headed to TFH-approved L and D Stable in Kentucky to begin transitioning to a second career. Founded in 2008, TFH is funded by owners, breeders, jockeys, trainers, individuals and Parx Racing management.

NIKKI SHERMAN / EQUI-PHOTO INC.

Undefeated 2YO
2023 Imply Stakes winner
AOIFE'S MAGIC
by **SMARTY JONES**

Brilliant 2-Year-Olds

EARLY SUCCESS WITH EQUISTAR STALLIONS

8-length winner in first start
$115,000 Oaklawn Park maiden special
APPEALING ADDIE
by **BRODY'S CAUSE**

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THE RACING BIZ
The Independent Voice for Mid-Atlantic Racing and Breeding

For Colonial Downs, more of the same sounds good: The Virginia Racing Commission approved a 2024 Colonial Downs schedule that looks like 2023 – but it's what may come next that's most interesting. Nick Hahn reports.

Charles Town to celebrate 90th anniversary: Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races celebrated its 90th anniversary and Ted Black took a look back on an eventful near-century.

HISA report finds "No singular cause" of Laurel spring fatalities: The report on Laurel Park's spring fatalites finds no one cause but some notable facts, reports Vespe.

Maryland Racetrack Operating Authority report deadline delayed: The Maryland Racetrack Operating Authority report on the future of racing in the state was delayed, its Dec. 1 deadline pushed back to Jan. 5, Frank Vespe reports.

Longtime Maryland Racing Commissioner Ernie Grecco passes: Longtime Maryland Racing Commission member Ernie Grecco, a friend to labor and a fan of Pimlico Race Course, passed in December at 81. Vespe remembers.

Rojas: "Nothing like loving your job": Preternaturally driven apprentice rider Martina Rojas has opened some eyes with solid meets at Presque Isle, Timonium, Pimlico and Laurel, notes Mike Valiante.

Backtracks: Mandy's Gold "showed up": Versatile and talented, Virginia-bred Mandy's Gold tangled with the best en route to becoming the best horse Michael Gorham has trained. Jennifer Kelly tells the story.

Milestones

The Jockey Club hired Hervey to research and document American racing's history in a multi-edition work, *Racing in America*. Hervey wrote three volumes in the series, the periods 1665-1865 (split into two books) and 1922-36. Hervey's exhaustively researched *Racing in America* books are considered by many to be his most important works. Previous selections to the Joe Hirsch Media Roll of Honor are Steven Crist (2010), Charles Hatton (2010), Bill Nack (2010), Red Smith (2010), Dr. Russ Harris (2011), Joe Palmer (2011), Jay Hovdey (2012), Whitney Tower (2012), Andrew Beyer (2013), Kent Hollingsworth (2013), George F. T. Ryall (2013), Jim Murray (2014), Jennie Rees (2014), Raleigh Burroughs (2015), Steve Haskin (2015), Jim McKay (2016), Maryjean Wall (2016), Barney Nagler (2017), Michael Veitch (2017), Jack Whitaker (2017), Joe Burnham (2018), Tom Hammond (2018), Charlsie Cantey (2019), Billy Reed (2019), Pierre "Peb" Bellocq (2020), William Leggett (2020), Walter Haight (2021), Jack Mann (2021), Jay Privman (2021), Heywood Hale Broun (2022), Bert Morgan (2022), and Damon Runyon (2022). The Joe Hirsch Media Roll of Honor was established in 2010 to recognize individuals whose careers have been dedicated to, or substantially involved in, writing about Thoroughbred racing (non-fiction), and who distinguished themselves as journalists. The criteria has since been expanded to allow the consideration of other forms of media.

Upgraded:

To a Grade 2 stakes, the Charles Town Oaks, by the American Graded Stakes Committee of the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association. The Oaks joins the Charles Town Classic in the Grade 2 ranks. The Charles Town Oaks is the richest sprint race for 3-year-old fillies in North America with a purse of $750,000 and has included among its starters Grade 1 winners Pauline's Pearl, Society, Wicked Whisper and champion Groupie Doll. Last year's winner Vahva closed 2023 with a Grade 2 win at Keeneland. Charles Town's $350,000 Robert Hilton Memorial, part of the Oaks/Classic undercard (Aug. 23), was upgraded to listed status for 2024. Several regional stakes were downgraded for 2024 including the Beverly D. (Colonial Downs) and United Nations (Monmouth Park) to Grade 2 and the Penn Mile to Grade 3. The Smarty Jones (Parx Racing) and Baltimore Washington International Turf Cup (Pimlico) were downgraded from Grade 3 to listed while eight regional stakes were downgraded to non-listed black type: the Penn Oaks, All Along, Obeah, Willa On the Move, Violet, Concern, Japan Turf Cup and Red Bank.

THE FIRST REMSEN WINNER AT 2, WOOD MEMORIAL WINNER AT 3 THIS CENTURY.

defeating Zandon-G1

defeating Early Voting-G1

MO DONEGAL

Uncle Mo - Callingmissbrown, by Pulpit

SPENDTHRIFT

$15,000 S&N

— Mid-Atlantic-bred Stakes Winners —

November 12 – December 9

Maryland-bred

CIRCLE P, b.g., 2021, Speightster—Quiet Inferno, by Quiet American. B-Marathon Farms Inc.; O-DeSales 85 LLC; T-Flint W. Stites. $100,000 Maryland Juvenile Championship S, Laurel Park, Dec. 2.

INTREPID DAYDREAM, dk.b./br.m., 2019, Jess's Dream—Intrepid Tour, by Jump Start. B/O-Paul L. Fowler Jr.; T-Gary Capuano. $75,000 Politely S, Laurel Park, Nov. 24.

JAXON TRAVELER, dk.b./br.h., 2018, Munnings—Listen Boy, by After Market. B-Dr. and Mrs. A. Leonard Pineau; O-West Point Thoroughbreds; T-Steven M. Asmussen. $100,000 Zia Park Sprint S, Zia Park, Nov. 28.

KISSEDBYANANGEL, dk.b./br.f., 2021, Golden Lad—Angelinthemorning, by Street Sense. B-Super C Racing Inc.; O/T-Joanne Shankle. $100,000 Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship S, Laurel Park, Dec. 2.

POST TIME, gr./ro.c., 2020, Frosted—Vielsalm, by Fairbanks. B-Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman, Dr. Brooke Bowman and Milton P. Higgins III; O-Hillwood Stable LLC; T-Brittany T. Russell. $100,000 City of Laurel S, Laurel Park, Nov. 25.

SEVEN'S ELEVEN, gr./ro.g., 2020, Bandbox—Senorita Siete, by Senor Swinger. B/O-Cottonwood Stable LLC; T-Carlos A. Mancilla. $75,000 Howard and Sondra Bender Memorial S, Laurel Park, Nov. 24.

Pennsylvania-bred

CAPO, b.g., 2021, Peace and Justice—Seven Dreams, by Majestic Warrior. B-A1A Racing; O/T-Jacinto Solis. $100,000 Pennsylvania Nursery S, Parx Racing, Nov. 28.

CARMELINA, b.f., 2021, Maximus Mischief—Complete St., by St Averil. B-Lillith E. Boucher; O-Cash is King LLC and LC Racing LLC; T-Robert E. Reid Jr. $100,000 Shamrock Rose S, Penn National, Nov. 22.

KING KUMBALAY, dk.b./br.g., 2018, Shanghai Bobby—Lovely Stay, by Flower Alley. B-Jonathan Sheppard; O-Kingsport Farm; T-Robert E. Reid Jr. $100,000 Richard W. Small S, Laurel Park, Nov. 25.

LIGHTNING RIDGE, b.g., 2020, Peace and Justice—Fareena, by Point Given. B-Jodie Pointer; O-KMSN Stable; T-Keri Brion. $35,000 Alston Cup S, Charleston, Nov. 12.

MORNING MATCHA, b.m., 2019, Central Banker—Home Ice, by Iam the Iceman. B-Crane Thoroughbred Services LLC; O-LC Racing, Cash is King LLC and Gary Barber; T-Robert E. Reid Jr. $125,000 New York Stallion Series S, Aqueduct, Dec. 3.

Virginia-bred

GIGANTE, b.c., 2020, Not This Time—Summertime Green, by Empire Maker. B-Ann Mudge Backer and Smitten Farm; O-Iapetus Racing and Diamond T Racing; T-Steven M. Asmussen. $250,000 Commonwealth Turf S, Churchill Downs, Nov. 26.

West Virginia-bred

JUBAWITHATWIST, gr./ro.g., 2021, Juba—Romantic Cork, by Denis of Cork. B-John A. Casey; O-KP Racing Stables LLC; T-Kristy Petty. $50,000 West Virginia Futurity, Charles Town, Nov. 25.

NO CHANGE, gr./ro.g., 2018, Fiber Sonde—Looks Like Trouble, by Indian Charlie. B-John D. McKee; O/T-Cynthia McKee. $75,000 Randy Funkhouser Memorial S, Charles Town, Nov. 18.

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An even dozen million-plus earners in 2023, topped by Brittany Russell who enjoyed a 25% win rate / 60% win-place-show rate. Kieron Magee was close behind with 23% / 58% , followed by Jack Fisher's 21 / 54%. Check out MidAtlanticTB.com for The Mill Leader Board, where we track our Mill-Fueled stables earnings, updated monthly. Congratulations to our million-plus earning stables of Brittany Russell, H. Graham Motion, Shug McGaughey, Horation DePaz, Kieron Magee, Hugh McMahon, Phil Capuano, Phil Schoenthal, Carlos Mancilla, Michael Matz, Mario Serey Jr., and Jack Fisher.
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Won the **John Battaglia Memorial S.,** winning by
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The runaway **No. 1** stallion in New Jersey

Sire of **GREAT NAVIGATOR**, a dominating **10-length winner** of the **Charles Hesse III H.** at Monmouth Park, third in the **Vosburgh S. (G2)** behind **CODY'S WISH**, and second in the **Sanford S. (G3)** at Saratoga at two.

No. 1 sire of 2YOs in New Jersey by **winners (5)**, **black-type horses (2)**, and **percentage of black-type horses to runners (25%)**.

His **five 2YO (MSW) winners** include stakes-placed **SEA STREAK** and **SHIP TO SHORE**.

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VINDICTIVE

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MO REASONS:

Defeated multiple G1 winner and Champion **Cody's Wish** in winning a MdSpWt at Saratoga and second by a neck to multiple GSW **First Captain** in the **Pimlico Special (G3).**

By Champion 2YO **UNCLE MO** ($150,000 stud fee), out of **EXOTIC BLOOM**, who has produced three-time G1 winner, Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1) winner and Champion **STOPCHARGINGMARIA** ($3,014,000), who sold for **$4.4 million.**

Trained by Hall of Famer Todd Pletcher, who described Vindictive as a typical Uncle Mo with great size, mental competitiveness, and definite Grade 1-winning ability whose career was cut short. Ran a 98 Beyer in winning his final start at Belmont Park in May.

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Uncle Mo-Exotic Bloom, by Montbrook

— Next Chapters —

BY MAGGIE KIMMITT

Monkey's Medal

ERIN GILMORE

Peter Brown-Whale and Monkey's Medal compete at the Loch Moy Horse Trials in November.

Peter Brown-Whale didn't plan on any of this. Not adopting an off-track Thoroughbred, boarding him at a local farm, retraining him and getting back into competition – none of it. The long-time exercise rider for trainer Tim Keefe had no agenda, but he had kept an eye on a favorite morning mount for several years after the horse was claimed away from Keefe.

On Sept. 6, 2021, the 10-year-old Monkey's Medal made career start 103 in a $5,000 claiming race at Timonium for trainer Mike Gorham and owner Robert Gorham Jr. The gelding won – for the 13th time – and was claimed back by Keefe. Brown-Whale picked up the gelding at the test barn that day, and their lives changed.

"This was a purely emotional decision," Brown-Whale said. "Not financial, not logical in any way. And it has worked out better than expected, for sure."

Brown-Whale was Monkey's Medal's exercise rider from the time he arrived at Keefe's Laurel Park barn as a 2-year-old in 2013 until he was claimed by Gorham three years later.

"He was always one of my favorites when we had him," Brown-Whale said. "So when he got claimed I was obviously disappointed by that, and I kept an eye on him."

By Medallist out of the Old Trieste mare My Little Monkey, Monkey's Medal was bred in Pennsylvania by Tom Teal and began his career running for his breeder.

Brown-Whale was also the regular exercise rider for stable star Eighttofasttocatch, a millionaire and three-time winner of the Maryland Million Classic, so the new arrival had quite the act to follow. It didn't take long for Monkey's Medal to measure up.

"He had a lot of personality, kind of a horse who would play and buck a lot," Brown-Whale said, "but just in a feeling good sort of way, not mean-spirited."

Monkey's Medal debuted as a 3-year-old at Penn National in February 2014 and was a model of consistency from the beginning, placing in his first five starts before breaking his maiden at Parx Racing four months later. His connections kept him protected in allowance and optional claiming races and he rewarded them with five wins over two seasons.

On April 1, 2016, Monkey's Medal finished third for a $32,000 tag and was claimed by Gorham for Old Coach Farm.

Brown-Whale kept a vigilant eye on his old friend.

"I always had him in my Equibase virtual stable, so I got all the updates whenever he did anything and never lost track of him at all."

Over the next five years, Monkey's Medal ran 80 times – all but two at Mid-Atlantic tracks. He earned black type with a third in the Roanoke Stakes at Parx Racing in 2016, but his eight wins for the Gorhams all came in claiming races.

"I knew a bunch of the jockeys who rode him, and I would ask about him," Brown-Whale said. "They would say, 'He's doing fine.' "

The horse ran to his ability and remained consistent, gradually appearing in the lower-level ranks. At age 10, he was regularly running for the $5,000 tag.

"I kept bugging Tim like, 'Hey, did you see this horse is in again?' " Brown-Whale said.

He wasn't the only one. Brown-Whale's wife Jenn would mention Monkey's Medal every time she saw Keefe. Then the trainer's clients Kim and Kelly Campbell reached out about helping give the horse a fitting retirement. So did another Keefe client, owner/breeder Cynthia McGinnes of Thornmar Farm.

"I always wanted to do right by the horse and do the right thing too, but to hear from people who had no connection to him was something else," Keefe said. "It's pretty amazing, and a great example of what horses mean to people."

Five years after losing Monkey's Medal at the claim box, Keefe returned serve and took him back. The trainer filled out the claim slip, but the others helped make it happen. With the horse came heavy numbers of 103-13-8-25 and $437,897 earned.

From Timonium, Monkey's Medal went to Keefe's barn at Laurel for about a week to be checked out and given time to decompress. From there, he went to Foxie G Foundation for another week to allow Brown-Whale time to find a suitable boarding arrangement.

Monkey's Medal was none the worse for wear, returning to his former connections sound and in good condition.

"They were definitely taking good care of him," Brown-Whale said.

The first order of business for the new partnership was well-earned downtime and turnout for Monkey's Medal. Brown-Whale, who grew up competing in hunter/jumper shows, had been out of that realm since 2006.

Born right next to Pimlico at Baltimore's Sinai Hospital, Brown-Whale moved overseas with his parents – who were missionaries – while still very young. He learned to ride in Mozambique when the family lived in Africa. Wanting their children to attend high school in the United States, the family returned, and Brown-Whale has been in Maryland ever since.

"I also rode in some amateur timber races, I think maybe a dozen or so," said Brown-Whale. "I was working for Bruce Fenwick, Tommy Smith and Charlie Fenwick at the time."

Brown-Whale gave Monkey's Medal a complete break for two months and then started hacking and gradually putting him back in work in May 2022.

> "This was a purely emotional decision. Not financial, not logical in any way. And it has worked out better than expected, for sure."
>
> *– Peter Brown-Whale, about claiming Monkey's Medal and pursuing a second career*

"Then I started just teaching him some basics. I had no goals with him at all . . . I literally didn't know what he would be capable of or what he would be good at. I didn't want to feel any pressure bringing him along. I didn't take him to his first show until a year and a half after I got him."

That first show was a combined training event at Columbia Horse Center in April 2023, which the pair "won easily."

"He's a very, very cool horse, and the jumping came very easily to him. I took him to the all-Thoroughbred show they had at Tranquility Manor Farms [in Monkton, Md.]. I put him in the hunter division there, and he did come in second in the handy hunter stake, but no – he's not really a hunter," Brown-Whale laughed.

Running and jumping was more his forte, so their next outing was a novice combined training event at the starter horse trials at Loch Moy Farm in Adamstown, Md., in November.

"He's very good at it," Brown-Whale said. "He finished second and won the T.I.P. [Thoroughbred Incentive Program] Award for highest-placing Thoroughbred."

Plans are to keep working over the winter and hopefully debut at training level next spring. To date, Brown-Whale has taken just two professional lessons – one from hunter/jumper trainer Carolyn Krome, with whom he rode as a teenager. The second, from event rider Sabrina Morris, was a dressage lesson "because dressage is *completely* different for me."

Most gratifying and enjoyable for Brown-Whale have been the reactions of people who have recognized Monkey's Medal at their competitions.

"They've all seen him run or run against him at some point. They had no actual connection to him. But people will casually hear me mention his name and say, 'You have Monkey's Medal?! I loved that horse!' " ■

— From the editor —

BY JOE CLANCY

Diving into the new year

Happy New Year. It's 2024. Got resolutions? This year, I resolve to have a concrete idea for each of these columns – a subject, a point, a declaration, an opinion.

As a friend used say when we coached Little League baseball and our team found yet another unique way to lose a game, "I don't care who you are, that's funny."

Maybe we can start next month, because this thing jumps around like a nervous foxhunter who just saw his first emu.

Library Magic

I made it to the Maryland Horse Library and Education Center. Finally. Beltway traffic is not my friend so I'm not a regular in Reisterstown, but I attended the holiday open house in December and finally got a look at the place.

In short, it's a winner. In long, I can't wait to get back. The books, all the books, are there of course but it's just a great spot with its sky-blue vaulted ceiling, tall windows, reading loft, research room, audio room and so on. For years, I heard Cricket Goodall talk about creating such a facility. She and the team, spurred by the Maryland Horse Breeders Association board and a slew of generous donors, created a lasting home base that will serve the industry. Don't be like me, get there soon and spend the day – be prepared to get lost in old chart books if nothing else (that Avalon Beach/Guy showdown at Delaware Park in 1978 was something).

No Change

Ain't Da Beer Cold won the Maryland Million Classic Oct. 14, and again Dec. 14 when an appeal to the Maryland

Racing Commission was dropped by Market Maven's trainer Jamie Ness and owner Gregory Gordon.

Market Maven edged Ain't Da Beer Cold by a neck in the $150,000 race at Laurel Park, but bumped his rival in deep stretch and was disqualified by the stewards after an objection lodged by Ain't Da Beer Cold's jockey Jevian Toledo. In Maryland, stewards' decisions can be appealed to the racing commission – owner/breeder Vivian Rall lost a Maryland Million race this way in 2020 – but all states don't work like that. In Kentucky and some others, stewards' decisions about matters pertaining to the running of a race are final. Participants can appeal fines, suspensions, medical issues, whatever, but a race declared official stays that way. That's the way it should be. Stewards, agree with them or not, are trained to make decisions about races. Their decisions about races should be final. None of that condones bad decisions. Stewards should be constantly trained, educated and evaluated. They should also be free to make final decisions without worrying about an appeal.

Pedigree Surfing

By no means am I qualified to evaluate Thoroughbred pedigrees, but I nevertheless find them fascinating to study and I frequently find regional connections where I don't expect them.

New Pennsylvania stallion Cloud Computing raced in the Mid-Atlantic just once, his 2017 Preakness Stakes-G1 win, but his roots run deep in the region. Maryland owner/breeder/trainer/veterinarian Dr. William Wright bred much of Cloud Computing's female family including his third and fourth dams Ameriangel and Ameriturn. Wright's mother-in-law Allaire duPont bred fifth dam Fanrigo. Frequently bred to Maryland stallions, they're the dams of regional stakes horses T.V. Highlights and Amerkingdom from the 1970s among others. Maryland-bred Ameriangel produced Grade 1 winner Halo America, whose sire Waquoit stood in Maryland.

Rookie New Jersey stallion Invader's pedigree starts out with an international flavor thanks to his dam Say (Ire), but returns to the United States and even runs through the region via generations cultivated by the Schiff family's Fox Ridge Farm. In addition to Grade 1 winners Riskaverse, Plugged Nickle, Tonalist and Havre de Grace, Invader is related to steeplechase winners Petroski and Devil's Egg who raced for Fox Ridge and Maryland trainer Tom Voss.

Another Jersey rookie, Max Player, is out of Maryland-bred Fools in Love. Bred by Bob Manfuso and Katy Voss, the daughter of Not For Love sold for $80,000 at Timonium as a yearling (she later sold for $1 million as a broodmare). Her dam, the French Deputy mare Parlez, produced seven winners including Maryland Million victors D C Dancer and No More Talk in addition to multiple graded winner International Star.

Colonial Revival

In 1970, Marion duPont Scott pushed her chips – and her clout – to the center of the table and created the Colonial Cup International Steeplechase. The first $100,000 jump race in the world lured 22 runners to Springdale Race Course in Camden, S.C.

DuPont and the other leaders of the day wanted to backstop jump racing after the New York tracks cut back on steeplechasing. They succeeded.

Americans Top Bid, Shadow Brook and Jaunty went 1-2-3, but that year's Cheltenham Gold Cup winner L'Escargot finished fourth for Ireland. Australian star Crisp, en route to England where he would win the 1971 Queen Mother and place second in the 1973 Grand National at Aintree, finished sixth. French Tan, second to L'Escargot at Cheltenham, finished 13th. Tingle Creek, soon to be one of England's most popular steeplechasers, was 14th. Irish Grand National winner Herring Gull refused to start.

The November race, 2¾ miles over packed pine fences and later the standard national fences, lasted 47 runnings through 2016. The Cup ran in the spring of 2018, then went on hiatus and looked gone forever. It returns this year, Nov. 17, thanks to sponsor Mullikin Law and the Carolina Cup Racing Association.

The race founder would be proud. ■

Stallionopoly

AS BREEDING SEASON NEARS, REGIONAL SIRE ROSTER SHUFFLES FOR 2024

By Joe Clancy

In West Virginia, an old farm bets on a new horse. In New Jersey, young stallions kindle interest. In Maryland, a newcomer with Kentucky clout muscles into the picture while the biggest names stand pat. In Pennsylvania, another Kentucky emigrant looks to rebuild. Though outpaced on numbers, Virginia adds to its roster.

If it's January, it's stallion season in the Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred industry and – even in uncertain times – the region percolates with talking points.

Start at the dean's office. Great Notion turned 24 on New Year's Day after leading the region in progeny earnings ($5.8 million through mid-December), winners (75) and stakes winners (seven) in 2023. Chief earner Coastal Mission put up eight wins and $448,205. Witty gave his sire a 14th consecutive year with a Maryland Million winner. Twisted Ride won five races and placed in a Grade 3 stakes. Fille d'Esprit won her 14th and 15th races and passed $780,000 in lifetime earnings.

At Northview Stallion Station in Maryland, the bay son of Elusive Quality takes it one day at a time.

"He's in good shape," said Northview's Paul O'Loughlin in December. "He has a full book of 25 to 30 mares again, already, and that's what we keep him at just because of his age. We want to limit that for him. As long as he keeps being able to breed mares, we'll keep doing it. I wish he was younger; he would make my job easier – he's a leader for me; when someone calls about him I do my best to sign up one of their other mares for one of the other stallions."

Northview is picky about more than numbers. Maiden mares need not apply, for example.

"We want them to get pregnant so we're not taking mares with spotty breeding records, things like that," said O'Loughlin. "It's nothing against them, and we're not turning away mares of any caliber, but we have to be selective. With an older stallion, you want a mare with a good history, that foals on time, all of that. It matters."

Though O'Loughlin didn't rule out an addition before breeding season starts, Northview's roster sits at nine for 2024. No matter, there will be plenty of new names soon enough. The first foals of Engage and Galawi (Ire) are yearlings of 2024.

"We're looking all the time and have seen a few but it hasn't worked out for one reason or another," O'Loughlin said. "Everybody either wants to keep racing or they want too much money. You can't blame them. It's hard to find the right fit for the region. The mare population has gone down, that's a battle all the time."

On the other side of the classroom from Great Notion stands new West Virginia stallion My Prankster. The 5-year-old joins the lineup at O'Sullivan Farms off a racing career with three wins in 10 starts with trainer Todd Pletcher. The son of Into Mischief cost $600,000 as a yearling, won his debut at Saratoga in 2021 and added the Swale Stakes-G3 in 2022. In Kentucky for the Keeneland November sale, O'Sullivan's John Funkhouser saw his new stallion at Taylor Made Farm and was sold early.

"I've been looking for a son of Into Mischief for the last five, six years figuring I'd have to settle for something unraced or whatever," Funkhouser said. "I never thought I'd be able to land a sprinting graded stakes winner by Into Mischief out of a champion mare."

My Prankster's dam My Wandy's Girl, a Puerto Rican champion as a 3-year-old in 2012, won 13 races at Camarero

(topped by two Grade 1 stakes) in 2011 and 2012. Sent to New York trainer Mike Hushion, she won twice including Laurel Park's Barbara Fritchie-G2 in 2014, while placing in five graded stakes. Into Mischief got Funkhouser's attention, the female family and overall pedigree lured him in some more. My Wandy's Girl's sire Flower Alley is by Distorted Humor, giving My Prankster a similar cross to Kentucky stallions Practical Joke and Life Is Good (sons of Into Mischief and Distorted Humor mares) who stand for $65,000 and $85,000 respectively. Funkhouser listed his horse at $2,500 live foal, with shares available.

A winner at 6, 6 1/2 and 7 furlongs, My Prankster should suit West Virginia breeders looking for Charles Town runners.

"He never won that Grade 1 or Grade 2 that would elevate his status, but that's why I was able to get him," said Funkhouser. "He's a beautifully made horse, a solid 15.3 [hands] and just going to fill out and look better and he's well-made up front. You don't want a small horse at Charles Town, but the big horses can't accelerate around the turns. Smaller horses can accelerate through those turns. He's perfectly made for Charles Town. Not too big, not too small."

Under its fourth generation of the Funkhouser family, O'Sullivan was founded in 1939 and also stands Aldrin, Capo Bastone, Golden Years, Last Print and Limehouse. Bred by O'Sullivan and sold as a yearling, Golden Years continues to make his presence felt with 55 mares bred in 2023 and solid runners.

"We'd never stood a homebred before," said Funkhouser. "We bred, raised and sold him, got him back, tried him at stud and here we are. I would have been on the fence if you asked me if he was going to make it. After I saw the babies, my opinion changed. He has some big crops coming. They're gorgeous individuals, they're really intelligent and they want to be racehorses."

Like everyone in the industry, regionally or beyond, Funkhouser looks toward the future with some trepidation but also sees opportunity.

"There are powers that be that want to shade a horrible picture on our industry and it seems like we have to go against that all the time," he said. "The people in the industry know we feed our horses before ourselves. You have to put your blinkers on, stay in your lane and do what's right for your horses and your business. I try not to listen too much to the outside noise and I try not to let it bother how I approach my business. I got a new stallion. We won't see his offspring race for four years. That's a little scary, a little risky, but I think he's a good bet, a really good bet."

BARBARA D. LIVINGSTON

The region's leading sire Great Notion continues to add to a long legacy of excellence in Maryland.

"I wish he was younger; he would make my job easier – he's a leader for me; when someone calls about him I do my best to sign up one of their other mares for one of the other stallions."

– Northview Stallion Station's Paul O'Loughlin

COURTESY O'SULLIVAN FARMS

Graded stakes winner My Prankster, a son of Into Mischief, enters stud at West Virginia's O'Sullivan Farms for 2024.

DOM NAPOLITANO / COGLIANSE PHOTOS

Grade 1 Jockey Club Gold Cup winner Max Player enters stud at owner George Hall's Annestes Farm in New Jersey.

On the other side of the region, two New Jersey stud farms look for reasons to be optimistic over Invader, Max Player, Sea Wizard and Vindictive. They're pretty much it when it comes to stallions in the Garden State, but that doesn't mean you should look past them. Max Player won a Grade 1 and earned $1.5 million over five seasons. Owner George Hall didn't see many offers from Kentucky farms and opted to set up his Annestes Farm in Middletown as a stallion base for the son of Honor Code and the Maryland-bred Not For Love mare Fools in Love.

"He wasn't a top-rated stallion by Kentucky standards, but I think he's a very good stallion in the New Jersey market and I've always been supportive of New Jersey racing," said Hall, whose racehorses have included the likes of millionaire graded stakes winners Ruler On Ice and Pants On Fire in addition to Max Player. "Monmouth is our home track along with the New York tracks, and we're very excited to try to breed him in New Jersey, create some good yearlings from New Jersey and help the program."

Hall bought Fools in Love for $80,000 as a yearling, won five races with her and sold her in foal to Speightstown for $1 million in 2017 (the year she produced Max Player). She won twice in New Jersey. Max Player won his second start at Parx Racing in 2019, added the 2020 Withers Stakes-G3 and finished third in that year's Travers-G1 and Belmont while starting in all three legs of the Covid-shuffled Triple Crown. His 2021 campaign included wins in the Suburban-G2 and Jockey Club Gold Cup-G1 for trainer Steve Asmussen. Hall, who oversees the Annestes Farm business (with facilities in New Jersey and Kentucky) with his brother John, hopes to get at least 20 mares to Max Player at the $5,000 live-foal fee and likes the reception so far.

"There's a lot of enthusiasm, and people have reacted positively to it in New Jersey," he said. "We've also seen a fair amount of interest from New York breeders and we're seeing a little bit of interest from Pennsylvania and some other states. We haven't done a lot of advertising yet, so hopefully we can build on it and make a difference in New Jersey."

Ten or so miles away in Colts Neck, three stallions will keep Pegasus Stud – the former Colonial Farms – flying this breeding season as established sire Sea Wizard leads rookies Invader and Vindictive. Colts Neck residents Carmine and Gail Spinella bought the farm and Sea Wizard from Sam Fieramosca, whose father John founded Colonial in 1950. New Jersey's leading sire in 2023, Sea Wizard stands for $5,000 live foal and might be responsible for any momentum the state's stallion business has.

His two crops to race include 14 runners. Eight are winners, topped by stakes winner Great Navigator (third to Cody's Wish in the Vosburgh-G2 last year). Sea Wizard bred 14 mares in 2022 and pushed that to 22 in 2023, a figure Sacco hopes to increase.

"He's a high-quality horse," said Rick Sacco, who oversees the Pegasus Stud venture for the Spinellas. "He had a breakout year with very small crops and he's throwing horses with speed. He's being very well-received."

Under the Spinellas and Sacco (manager for Red Oak Stable and the Good Chance Farm training center in Florida), the 120-acre Colonial has been rebooted into Pegasus with updates to the barns, paddocks, roads and other facilities

BILL DENVER / EQUI-PHOTO, INC.

First-year stallions Invader (top) and Vindictive bolster business at the new Pegasus Stud (with the proven Sea Wizard) in New Jersey.

Former Spendthrift Farm stallion Cloud Computing, the 2017 Preakness winner, joins Wicked Strong and Lord Shanakill at Pin Oak Lane Farm in Pennsylvania.

"I look at how many mares they bred, how many foals are still out racing and when they tell me they have 110 or 115 yearlings that gets me to prick my ears up a little bit."

– Pin Oak Lane Farm's Dr. Bill Solomon, about moving stallions to the region

slated to continue into 2024. Sea Wizard's burgeoning career was part of the equation, but he'll have company from the first-year stallions.

A son of War Front, Invader cost $500,000 as a yearling and won three races (on synthetic at Turfway Park) topped by the John Battaglia Memorial, for trainer Wesley Ward. Out of Group 3 winner Say (Ire), a daughter of Galileo (Ire), Invader is a full-brother to Grade 1 winner Fog of War (who stands in New York) and overseas stakes winner Naval Intelligence.

"New Jersey has a really good restricted turf program now and we were looking for a grass stallion to fit that," Sacco said. "The New Jersey program is very lucrative and we think he's a good choice."

Vindictive, a son of Uncle Mo, won half of his eight starts with Pletcher and was beaten a head when second in the 2022 Pimlico Special-G3. Off for a year after that, he won a Belmont Park allowance in May 2023 in what turned out to be his final start.

Another stallion relocated from Kentucky, Cupid will stand at Maryland's Atlanta Hall Farm. His foals include 2023 Grade 1 winner Carson's Run.

"Todd said he was right on the cusp of becoming a really good horse," Sacco said. "He was very fast, a big, powerful, high-quality horse that didn't win a stakes but was graded-stakes placed. That's why we got him and why he's standing in New Jersey."

The 6-year-old bay packs a punch on his female side as a half-brother to Breeders' Cup Distaff-G1 winner and $3 million earner Stopchargingmaria.

Sacco steered Red Oak racehorses King for a Day (like Vindictive a son of Uncle Mo) and Mind Control (a $2 million earner who won several graded stakes) to New York stallion deals, and put that experience to use at Pegasus even if the formula isn't quite the same.

"I know farms, that's what I know," he said. "I got my feet wet in the stallion business with those two in New York and it has gone well. This is a little different. It's a picturesque, boutique farm that is a stallion operation. We'll have stallions, mares, weanlings and yearlings here, that's it. Sea Wizard will get us a lot of attention and the other two fit for New Jersey. We're ready to work hard and bring some really high-end bloodstock to the state of New Jersey."

Sacco said Pegasus will experiment with free van rides to the farm, and back, for mares.

Pennsylvania's Pin Oak Lane Farm adds a new stallion in 2017 Preakness-G1 winner Cloud Computing. The son of Maclean's Music had 180 foals in his first two crops, coming up with 55 winners and three stakes winners (through Dec. 19). The numbers put him a close second behind Warrior's Reward by progeny earnings ($2.7 million) among Pennsylvania stallions. Pin Oak Lane, which also stands Wicked Strong and Lord Shanakill, wasn't necessarily in the market for a newcomer – until Spendthrift Farm's Mark Toothaker called.

"I said I'd think about it," said Dr. Bill Solomon, Pin Oak Lane's owner and a leading breeder in Pennsylvania for decades. "I thought about it. He's all right. He's by a $40,000

"He has earned it. I'm already booking a lot of mares this year. I couldn't get people to breed to him at the beginning. It was a lot of hard work. Now he kind of sells himself."

– Murmur Farm's Audrey Murray, about popular young stallion Blofeld

horse, out of a good mare. I look at how many mares they bred, how many foals are still out racing and when they tell me they have 110 or 115 yearlings that gets me to prick my ears up a little bit."

Solomon's ears ought to be forward. Cloud Computing bred 113 mares in 2021, resulting in 69 live foals who will be 2-year-olds this year. In 2022, the dark bay bred 166 mares to put another 104 live foals into the pipeline. They'll be 2-year-olds next year. Last year, the mares dropped to 47 but that's still fairly strong by regional stallions. Solomon will aim for 40 mares this year, while hoping for some success on the racetrack to prove Cloud Computing's value to Mid-Atlantic breeders.

"He's a good-looking horse, a lot of size to him, and he had some speed too," said Solomon. "Wicked Strong is a little more of a distance horse so it's a good mix and I'm very fond of Lord Shanakill but he won't breed many mares."

Like Cloud Computing, new Maryland stallion Cupid launched his career in Kentucky – standing six seasons at Ashford Stud – before moving to Atlanta Hall Farm in Monkton. The Voss family's historic farm gets its first stallion. Gary Murray, whose wife Elizabeth is the daughter of the late Hall of Fame trainer Tom Voss and Maryland owner/breeder Mimi Voss, gets a new challenge after working with stallions in Kentucky, Chile and Ireland.

"We're up and running and we have contracts back," said Murray. "We have 40 to 50 mares verbally on board and I feel good about that. I want to get 100 mares. That's going to be a push in any regional market, maybe a bit lofty, but you have to have a target. He's capable, he's getting good success on the track with all types of horses."

Cupid's 2023 runners had earned $3.63 million (through Dec. 16), second behind Great Notion on the Maryland list. Grade 1 winner Carson's Run and Grade 3 winner Duke of Love led the way, rare graded winners by regional stallions.

Nobody made a bigger impact on the region's recent stallion scene than Murmur Farm's Blofeld, who built success on small books of mares over his first four seasons. The squads included 42 winners (from 54 runners and 73 foals) in his first three crops through Dec. 16. The success translated to far more business the last two seasons, with 86 mares bred in 2022 and 97 in 2023. Murmur's Audrey Murray expects her one-horse stallion barn to be busy again this year thanks to 2023 Maryland Million Lassie winner Miss Harriett, Louisiana-bred stakes winner Alpine Mist and a host of others.

"Business is great," she said. "He has earned it. I'm already booking a lot of mares this year. I couldn't get people to breed to him at the beginning. It was a lot of hard work. Now he kind of sells himself. It takes a long time. You have to wait in the stallion business. It's very hard when you start a stallion because it takes so long to get horses to the races, but now look at him."

Stallion Notes

Like Northview, Maryland's Country Life Farm did not add a new stallion for 2024, but **Divining Rod** and **Mosler** continue to build on solid early careers. Excluding new arrival Cupid, Divining Rod led Blofeld by about $90,000 in the region's third-crop race. The son of Tapit had sired 41 winners from 76 starters through Dec. 16, headed by dual stakes winner Precious Avary. Mosler started his stud career one year ahead of Divining Rod and was seventh on Maryland's overall list (excluding Cupid) at just shy of $2 million in progeny earnings . . . Maryland's Anchor and Hope Farm also stood pat, with **Bourbon Courage**, **Holy Boss** and **Long River** filling out the roster . . . Pennsylvania's Blackstone Farm continued to consolidate into a stallion base as the home of **Uptowncharlybrown**, **Peace and Justice**, **Eastwood** and newcomer **Warrant**. The son of Constitution won the 2021 Oklahoma Derby-G3 and was beaten a head in the 2022 Santa Anita Handicap-G1 for trainer Brad Cox. The millionaire is a half-brother to Ms Locust Point, who won the 2018

2024 STALLIONS

ARCANGELO	$35,000
CANDY RIDE	$75,000
CATALINA CRUISER	$10,000
CITY OF LIGHT	$35,000
CONNECT	$15,000
DAREDEVIL	$15,000
FLIGHTLINE	$150,000
GAME WINNER	$20,000
GIFT BOX	$5,000
HONOR A. P.	$10,000
LIAM'S MAP	$40,000
MINESHAFT	$10,000
QUALITY ROAD	$200,000
THE FACTOR	$10,000
TONALIST	$10,000
TWIRLING CANDY	$60,000
UNION RAGS	$15,000
UP TO THE MARK	$25,000
WEST COAST	$5,000

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Casey's Legacy stallion Juba is among the leading sires in West Virginia for 2023.

Barbara Fritchie-G2 at Laurel Park . . . Also in Pennsylvania, WynOaks Farm boasted the state's top two stallions – outside of newcomer Cloud Computing – in **Warrior's Reward** and **Weigelia**. Warrior's Reward led the way with $2.8 million in progeny earnings and 64 winners. Weigelia was less than $200,000 behind in third . . . **True Valour (Ire)** moved from Maryland, where he bred 22 mares in 2023 (his first season), to Virginia's Legacy Farm . . . **Beverly Park** (a son of Munnings and the Langfuhr mare Madeira Park) led North America with 15 wins in 2022 and was slated to stand for a private fee at Mountain Springs Farm in Pennsylvania. Second at Fair Grounds in December, Beverly Park had won 29 of 63 starts for earnings of $643,905 through Dec. 16 . . . Pennsylvania's Bonner Hill Farms planned to stand **Buy Land and See** for his first season. The Pennsylvania-bred son of Cairo Prince and the Maria's Mon mare Twiggles won six stakes and earned $578,390 for owner/breeder Joe Imbesi . . . New York-bred **Somelikeithotbrown** joins the Pennsylvania's sire ranks at Cabin Creek Gettysburg. The son of Big Brown won 10 races and earned $1.7 million while competing primarily on the turf. He won the Bernard Baruch-G2, Dinner Party-G2 and WinStar Mint Million-G3 . . . The West Virginia stallion race came down to the end of the year with **Fiber Sonde**, **Windsor Castle** and **Juba** within $48,870 by progeny earnings (through Dec. 19). Juba, who stands at Casey's Legacy, got there with just 101 foals (compared to 333 for Fiber Sonde and 441 for the late Windsor Castle). The son of Tapit's four crops to race included 49 winners from 70 starters. ■

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Baltimore to Big Time

AFTER LANDING JOB WITH PLETCHER, MERRITT RECEIVES GODOLPHIN AWARD

By Tom Law

Dominick Merritt gallops Up to the Mark at Santa Anita in preparation for the 2023 Breeders' Cup.

Dominick Merritt showed up for his rapid-fire interview with the final judging panel for Godolphin's Thoroughbred Industry Employee Awards Oct. 15 at Keeneland Race Course well into his work day, decked out in riding helmet and boots. Merritt, who goes by Nick at the barn and to his friends and family, left his crop and safety vest in the car.

"When I walked in and saw the other finalists dressed up, I thought, 'Uh oh,' " Merritt said two mornings later, cleaning his tack outside the shedrow of Todd Pletcher's barn at Keeneland. "Here I was, in work attire, but it was the only time I had during the break. Todd knew about it, and thankfully he was on board."

Merritt's attire certainly proved no hinderance. Perhaps it even resonated with the seven judges who ultimately picked him as the recipient of TIEA's Newcomer Award for 2023.

Merritt, who grew up on Lakewood Avenue in Baltimore City before moving to nearby Hereford after graduating from high school, earned $2,500 for himself and another $1,000 for the team at Pletcher's stable with the Newcomer Award. He topped the other two finalists – Sara Gordon, former Maryland Horse Breeders Association communications manager and social media manager at Thoroughbred Daily News; and Deja Robinson, a nursery staff technician at Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital in Kentucky – along with 11 other nominees in the category.

"He's been a terrific employee: dedicated, great disposition, loves his horses," Pletcher said. "He's been a real asset to the stable."

Merritt came to Pletcher's string at Saratoga Race Course's Oklahoma Training Track in early May, after getting his start at the Boniface family's Bonita Farm in Darlington, Md.

Passionate about horses from a young age – he begged an uncle to take him racing at Pimlico Race Course when the Baltimore track was open – Merritt landed at Bonita when a student advisor introduced him to Chris and Kevin Boniface in 2018.

"I was optimistic they would be open to showing Dominick the facility," said Jennie Towner, associate vice president of student development at Harford Community College in Bel Air, Md., who nominated Merritt for the Newcomer Award. "Little did I know that Chris and Kevin would take Dominick under their wing. They taught him to clean stalls, groom and even ride."

Merritt eventually honed his skills enough to land a recommendation from Kevin Boniface to take the next step.

"Kevin actually called me over the winter when we were still at Palm Beach Downs and we set it up," said Pletcher's longtime assistant Tristan Barry, who supervises the Saratoga string from the spring through the fall. "He started first thing here when we arrived in April."

Merritt made a positive early impression on Barry and later on his Hall of Fame boss, enough to accompany multiple Grade 1 winner Up to the Mark first to Keeneland to finish his Breeders' Cup preparations and eventually on to Santa Anita Park before he finished second to Auguste Rodin (Ire) in the Breeders' Cup Turf-G1 Nov. 4. Merritt rode some of the other Pletcher trainees at the Breeders' Cup, including eventual Breeders' Cup Juvenile-G1 winner Fierceness.

MAGGIE KIMMITT

Trainer Kevin Boniface helped introduce Dominick Merritt to racing, including a flat ride at the Fair Hill Point-to-Point in 2019.

ECLIPSE SPORTSWIRE

Nick Caras of the New York Race Track Chaplaincy (left) and event emcee Todd Schrupp present Dominick Merritt with his Godolphin TIEA award.

"He's done a great job on Up to the Mark, he's not easy and I'm glad Todd took him to the Breeders' Cup to ride him," Barry said. "He's a very talented horse but he's not easy. Not easy to gallop at all.

"Obviously, he's honed his skills more as he's been here. What's great about him is he listens. He listens to what you tell him and then he applies it to the horses. That's half the problem, most of the guys they think their talent level is up here and really it's down here. He didn't come in with a high opinion of himself. He just did well from the get-go, tried to learn and kept at it."

Merritt works to make sure the opportunity doesn't stop with him. He is a mentor with the nonprofit organization Saddle Up Scholars, which works with youth connected to equestrian outreach programs to provide academic support to young horse enthusiasts facing educational or financial challenges due to systemic inequalities. He works one-on-one and in small groups, sharing his story and encouraging children with similar backgrounds

The mentoring sessions are done in person – like when Merritt returned to Baltimore for last year's Preakness Weekend at Pimlico Race Course and participated in the Sunrise Tours – or virtually.

"Mentoring is really important to me because I want to be a positive outlet so people know there's a lot to offer in this world," Merritt said. "Don't limit yourself to just one city or one state. There's a lot you can do. I met with a young lady yesterday. She was so nervous to meet me. I was like, 'I'm human. At the end of the day, I'm human like you.' Once they realize that I'm human, no bigger than anyone else, they open up. She started asking questions, joking around.

"I told her to never let anybody discourage you from being great. You're going to run into people that don't always want to see you win, but instead of letting that put you down, use it as motivation. Show the world, or show that person, I'm going to do this even as much as you said I won't or I can't. You can be whatever you want in life. That's what I tell the kids. Dreams do come true. I dreamed about this since I was 6, 7. My parents can testify to that. I always dreamed about riding racehorses. Dreams definitely do come true; that's my main message to anybody."

Merritt, along with the other members of Pletcher's team and his stable, headed to South Florida and Palm Beach Downs for the winter. He'll continue mentoring there and when he returns to the north come spring, all while learning his craft.

"Racing has given me a positive outlet; it's something I can look back and be proud of," he said. "I have a friend that is incarcerated, and he calls me every day. His brightest news is what I give him about my job and my life. He knows the path that I'm on is a positive path. It's something I can develop, keep growing, keep motivating others to be great. Especially people from my hometown, for them to know that. To know that there's more to life than what you think it is. A quick dollar isn't going to last long. That's where a lot of kids mess up. They see a quick dollar and think, 'I'm a big shot now.' But it won't last forever. You need longevity in some shape or form. That's another reason why I really enjoy mentoring. I don't want those kids going down the path that I've seen some people go down."

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The Mid-Atlantic region was represented by another Thoroughbred Industry winner in Myra "Mickey" Hall, a groom at Graham and Anita Motion's Herringswell Stables
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"Mentoring is really important to me because I want to be a positive outlet so people know there's a lot to offer in this world."

– Dominick Merritt

who won the Dedication to Racing Award sponsored by the New York Racing Association.

Hall, who collected $7,500, joined Herringswell in 2015. She started in racing shortly after school at Pennsylvania's Hanover Shoe Farms, a leader in the Standardbred industry, before working with Frank "Pancho" Martin in Florida and New York. Hall rode races in Ohio in the 1980s before relocating to California to gallop horses for David Hofmans, Neil Drysdale, Randy Bradshaw and the late Charlie Whittingham.

Hall raised three children – who later put themselves through school – following the sudden passing of her husband and farrier Barry Hall in 2006. She worked for renowned veterinarian Dr. William E. Riddle Jr. at Cecil Veterinary Clinic in Port Deposit, Md., before joining the Motions at Fair Hill Training Center.

Other TIEA winners:

Support Services Award, sponsored by 1/ST Racing: Bill Vest, backside security manager at Churchill Downs.

Katherine McKee Administration Award, sponsored by Keeneland: Kelly Danner, Racing Operations Manager, Churchill Downs.

Dedication to Breeding Award, sponsored by Hallway Feeds: Jimmy Tate, Assistant Broodmare Manager, WinStar Farm.

Leadership Award, sponsored by Hagyard Equine Medical Institute: Manuel Hernandez, Farm Manager, Walmac Farm.

Dr. J. David "Doc" Richardson Community Award, sponsored by Churchill Downs: Linda Doane, Lifestyle Program Director, The Healing Place/Churchill Downs. ■

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Undersold in December

UNCERTAIN RACING CLIMATE, FEWER QUALITY RACEHORSES FUEL DECLINES AT SALE

By John Piassek ■ *Fasig-Tipton Photos*

In mid-November, when Fasig-Tipton Midlantic released the catalog for the December mixed sale, you might have predicted a decline in sales figures. The book didn't quite have the same star power as 2022 when racehorses Radical Right and Heldish stood out and paced the final numbers by selling for $260,000 and $160,000 respectively.

After the final hammer dropped and the dust settled at the Timonium, Md., sales pavilion Dec. 5, the prediction proved correct as 148 horses sold for $1,518,100, good for a median of $5,000 and an average of $10,257. Those figures were down substantially from 2022, when 172 horses went for $3,233,600 (an average of $18,800 and a $10,000 median).

As such, assessments of the same were somewhat couched. The consensus: given the catalog, not bad.

"I think we have to be pleased," said Paget Bennett, sales director of Fasig-Tipton Midlantic. "We got a lot of horses sold, we got a lot of people to come to the grounds, people were still there on sale day, we got horses moved, and I think the takeaway was that it was good. Could it have been better? Sure. We can always do better. But based on what we had and what we brought to the marketplace, we're pleased."

The consolidation of interest in Kentucky sales and Kentucky stallions, at the expense of regional markets, was on display. Horses by Kentucky stallions tended to get more interest.

"It was like a tale of two cities," said Country Life Farm's Mike Pons. "Either you made the short list of the ones [the top buyers] liked and everybody else, especially the Maryland-sired ones, and I thought unfairly, really got clobbered. It was just a kick in the tail and just really frustrating, because there were a lot of really nice horses that people put 15k, 20k, 25k into them, and they got back $1,500 for them."

Pons thought some of the regional-sired weanlings were undervalued: "It's distressing to see the babies get really spanked, when there are some really nice horses. It's one thing if there's an old, barren mare, and she's had a couple of swings and misses, but these little weanlings, to me, they're lottery tickets, and you don't know what they're going to do, especially the attractive ones."

Bennett went back to the stallions for a reason.

"The regional markets struggle a bit," she said. "Some of these regional sires just don't get the respect the Kentucky sires do. People want Kentucky-sired horses, and as we saw with the horse that topped the sale, that's what people want, that's what people go after.

"It's kind of a tough sale to end the season on, because we're needed here in the region, our breeders count on it because they can't travel to Kentucky, their horses would be lost in the Kentucky marketplace, so this is the place they need to come to . . . We did have some people that were very pleased, they got their horses sold, they got them into good hands, and they'll go on to the next one. Some people weren't as lucky. The broodmares can be a little tough, people can be very selective with what they buy with the mares."

Bennett was pleased by the decline in the RNA rate. Thirty-nine horses offered were not sold, for a rate of 20.8 percent, a decline from 24.5 in 2022.

"Really, going in, it wasn't the best group of horses," said leading consignor Bill Reightler. "There were some nice horses in there, but in years past, there were higher-quality horses in the horses of racing age section and we were lacking there, too. Usually, the horses of racing age sort of carry the sale. There weren't as many weanlings by Kentucky sires, and those are what the pinhookers go for."

Like Bennett, Reightler looked at it from a practical standpoint too.

"The clearance rate was better than it was last year, the gross was off 50 percent, but that was because we didn't have as many horses of racing age, and they always sell pretty well," he said. "It's all about quality: if you have quality individuals, people step up and pay good money for them. There were years past where we could sell horses in all types of price ranges, but now, the upper-class horses are selling well, and it's hard on everything else."

Uncertainty in the region, especially in Maryland, also factored. The 10-year deal that previously governed racing at the Maryland Jockey Club tracks is no longer in effect, and the Maryland Racetrack Operating Authority's report about the future was delayed from Dec. 1 to Jan. 5.

"The racehorses, maybe not so much, because they're training and can go right on to the races," said Bennett of the climate's effect on the marketplace. "But the horses that people have to take a couple years to raise them, people don't know what's going to be happening in a couple of years."

Pons agreed. "I thought the Maryland-sired guys were unfairly discriminated against, and I don't know what we do to change that. We certainly have to get the racetrack situation figured out and then put it on more quality footing. The December sale is important to an operation like us, because if we're closing out a partnership, it's a very useful spot on the calendar to take a mare, her baby, and end it in this tax year, so that whatever losses carry forward, and it just moves on. I'd hate to lose this sale, because strategically, it's very important to us and this region."

Pons credited Fasig-Tipton for its commitment to the region.

"I'm a little discouraged for Fasig, because they live on the gross," he said. "The May sale's never been better, but that's at the high end, and we're on the other end of the scale here, and guys like myself, and the Northview guys and other guys are kind of licking our wounds. But you can get the horses sold, you just couldn't get what you really wanted and what they deserved."

Reightler said the racing climate affects the broodmare market.

A Ghostzapper weanling colt consigned by Northview Stallion Station topped the sale at $82,000 on a bid by Kentucky pinhooker Carrie Brogden of Machmer Hall.

"For people buying broodmares, especially, it's a long-term project, so they have to feel good about things, and right now, there's not a lot of optimism to bring people to Maryland," he said.

Kentucky buyer Carrie Brogden of Machmer Hall admitted that one of the factors that led her to the top-selling horse of the sale, a Maryland-bred weanling bred by Owen Kiernan, was his sire, Ghostzapper. Consigned by Northview Stallion Station, David Wade agent, the bay colt fetched $82,000 – the highest-selling weanling at the December sale since 2020, when Machmer Hall went to $150,000 for a New York-bred Laoban colt.

"His sire power [was the main factor]," said Brogden. "Obviously, Ghostzapper has been a tremendous sire over the years, and I was a fan of him on the racetrack in addition."

Brogden had her eye on the weanling before the sale. She asked Wade to send videos of his horses who looked appealing on paper. The Ghostzapper weanling caught her attention, and when she saw him in person, he lived up to expectations, despite his late foaling date.

Broodmare prospect Truancy, consigned by Bill Reightler, brought $55,000 on a bid by Country Life Farm.

"He matched the looks in the videos and he vetted out well," she said. "This baby, even though he's a May 28, he had plenty of size for his foaling date. I was surprised at how big he was. Even when David sent me videos, I asked him if the horse was big enough, and he said yes, especially with his foaling date. He was beautifully prepped, too. They did a great job. He looked healthy and strong and had a nice, fluffy coat, which meant he hadn't been hotboxed, so that's all stuff that we really look for and appreciate. We're really excited to have him, and we Breeders' Cup-nominated him already."

Brogden also purchased Maryland-bred broodmare Petition Prayer for $38,000 from the Reightler consignment. The 4-year-old daughter of Divining Rod won three times in six starts and placed in the 2022 Miss Disco Stakes at Laurel Park in her final start.

"I really appreciate stakes mares, and if we're adding mares to our broodmare band, I'm really trying to only add mares that are stakes-quality," said Brogden. "That or Unbridled's Song mares, but the Unbridled's Song mares are getting pretty old now. Anyway, I marked her on the catalog, she goes back to a nice family, and I went to her consignor, and I texted my husband, 'Holy Toledo, this mare's gorgeous!' She was absolutely beautiful and acted with a lot of class about her. We were delighted to get her."

Out of the Arch mare Written Request, Petition Prayer sold for $80,000 as a yearling to Mens Grille Racing and earned $102,300 on the track with trainer Hammy Smith. Her female family includes stakes winners Petition the Lady, General Challenge, Evening Jewel and others.

"She had a lot of quality and was a good runner," said Reightler. "Carrie Brogden is a very shrewd buyer, she's certainly done very well, and for her to want to buy says something about that individual."

A frequent visitor to the December sale, Brogden pointed to the lighter catalog and Fasig-Tipton's digital sale, Dec. 7-12, as reasons for the decline.

"It's hard with the regional market, now that digital sales are going to be pulling a lot more from the regional markets," she said. "There are 400 entries in that sale, and I guarantee if

SALES LEADERS

$82,000. b.c., 2023, Ghostzapper—Dance All Day, by Exaggerator (Md.); Northview Stallion Station (David Wade), agent; Machmer Hall.

$55,000. Truancy, dk.b./br.f., 2019, Run Away and Hide—Successfully Sweet, by Successful Appeal (N.Y.); Bill Reightler, agent; Country Life Farm, agent.

$52,000. Abracadabra, ch.m., 2012, Speightstown—Wicked Charm, by Ghostzapper (Ky.) (in foal to Practical Joke); James F. Thames (Horse Play Racing), Northview Stallion Station (David Wade), agent; Cash Is King.

$45,000. C V's Pride, b.c., 2023, Vekoma—Kela's Pride, by Kela (W.Va.); Bill Reightler, agent; David Raim, Jeff Runco, agent.

$40,000. gr./ro.c., 2023, Combatant—Matinee Express, by Zensational (N.Y.); Harry L. Landry Bloodstock LLC, agent; Flatbird Stable.

$40,000. Paynter's Prodigy, b.g., 2021, Paynter—English Chocolate, by Midnight Lute (Ky.); Marshall W. Silverman, agent; Flatbird Stable.

$38,000. Petition Prayer, dk.b./br.f., 2019, Divining Rod—Written Request, by Arch (Md.); Bill Reightler, agent; Machmer Hall.

$35,000. Sweetcatherinerose, ch.f., 2021, Brody's Cause—Devil's Shoes, by Maclean's Music (Ky.); Northview Stallion Station (David Wade), agent; Roger Sterling.

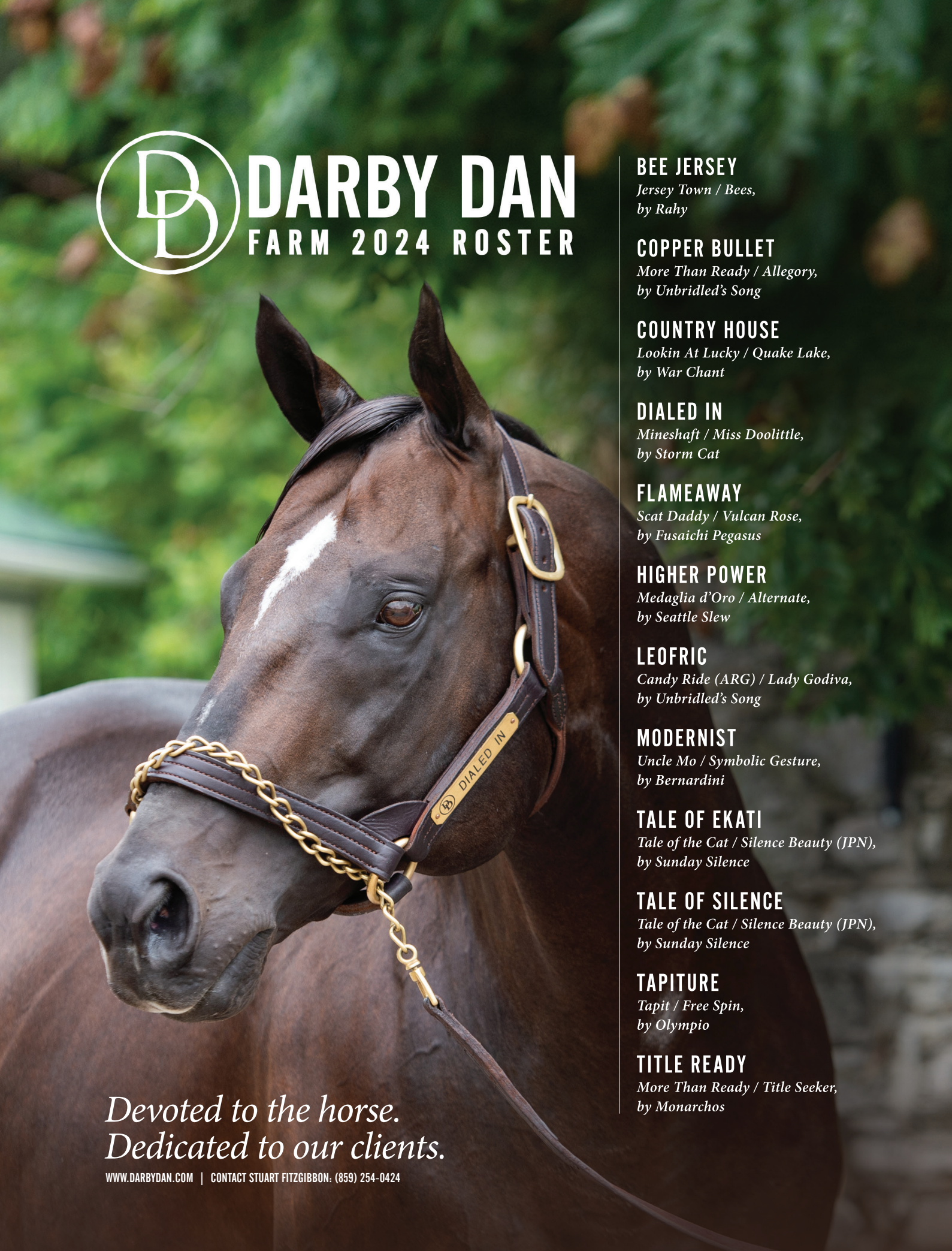
$30,000. Starlit Music, dk.b./br.f., 2023, Candygram—Starvista, by Maclean's Music (W.Va.); Bill Reightler, agent; Barbara S. Brown.

$30,000. dk.b./br.f., 2023, Independence Hall—Hiding, by Posse (Md.); Country Life Farm and partners (to dissolve a partnership), Bill Reightler, agent; Classic Automations, Love's Equine, agent.

$30,000. b.c., 2023, Tacitus—Swamp Pass Alley, by Quality Road (Md.); Northview Stallion Station (David Wade), agent; Classic Automations, Love's Equine, agent.

$30,000. Angelinthemorning, dk.b./br.m., 2015, Street Sense—Tabulation, by Giant's Causeway (Ky.); Bill Reightler, agent; Mike Coombs.

$30,000. Bazinga D, b.c., 2020, Hoppertunity—Bazinga B, by Lion Hearted (Pa.); Northview Stallion Station (David Wade), agent; Robert W. Dunham.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Scat Daddy / Vulcan Rose,
by Fusaichi Pegasus
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Medaglia d'Oro / Alternate,
by Seattle Slew
LEOFRIC
Candy Ride (ARG) / Lady Godiva,
by Unbridled's Song
MODERNIST
Uncle Mo / Symbolic Gesture,
by Bernardini
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Tale of the Cat / Silence Beauty (JPN),
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they put all those mares in there, they would've brought the same at the digital sale. And then you don't have the shipping and the halters and the day rate and the handling and the physical, they can just be shipped from point A to point B.

"It'll be interesting to see how much the proliferation of the digital market does affect a lot of these regional markets. We're definitely in a very changing dynamic."

In spite of better catalogs elsewhere, Brogden still enjoys making the trip. Her 2022 weanling purchases at Timonium – a $38,000 Jimmy Creed colt pinhooked for $65,000 and a $30,000 Promises Fulfilled colt sold for $110,000 – produced positive returns at yearling sales.

"I like kind of going back to the well," she said. "I don't have to compete against some of the other big-time weanling pinhookers, because it's just not worth their while to travel all the way up there to look at three or four horses, but I'm such a horse sale junkie that I could go to an Arabian horse sale and be happy, because there's horses around."

Reightler also consigned the highest-priced broodmare prospect, New York-bred Truancy. The dark bay Run Away and Hide filly, a two-time winner with earnings of $135,350, went to Country Life Farm for $55,000. Although Country Life usually buys established broodmares or mares in foal, Pons decided to take a slightly different approach.

"Barclay Tagg trained her, she's a half to a Grade 3 winner [Confrontation], she had the kind of figures that would've won New York-bred stakes if she had run in them," said Pons. "Although she wasn't a stakes winner, she had stakes ability. We saw her, and she had this deep shoulder and this smooth walk, and we thought 'Wow, look at this filly.' Usually, we buy mares in foal, so that we have something to market or sell, either as a weanling or a yearling. We're going a little bit farther out."

Truancy won twice at 3 in 2022 and was prepping for a return this fall, including a bullet half-mile (from 99 workers) at Belmont Park in September.

> "She was absolutely beautiful and acted with a lot of class about her. We were delighted to get her."
>
> *– Carrie Brogden, about the purchase of broodmare prospect Petition Prayer*

"She could really motor," said Pons. "Those types of mares, that speed can get you a really good racehorse or sales horse. They're really attractive to us. We thought, 'Gosh, that same mare in Kentucky brings 75k to 100k' so it's like you turn your hat around. When you're selling, you're getting your teeth handed to you. When you're buying, you realize how far your dollars go."

Reightler said the now 5-year-old mare exceeded expectations.

"I thought going in, she would've brought $30-40,000, but the reason we sell them at auction is [the auction's] competitive nature," he said. "She had a problem with one of her knees, but they thought she had a lot of talent. She was exquisite physically, she's a very attractive mare."

Reightler also consigned a pair of high-priced West Virginia-bred weanlings, both bred by Susan Wantz. A colt by

LEADING CONSIGNORS

Gross Sales

Bill Reightler, agt. (49) $480,200
Northview Stallion Station, agt. (34) 471,400
Marshall W. Silverman, agt. (19) 165,000
Harry L. Landry Bloodstock, agt. (6) 67,000
Chanceland Farm, agt. (9) 55,500

Average Sales (3 or more sold)

Jorge Duarte Jr., agt. (3) $17,333
Northview Stallion Station, agt. (34) 13,865
Crane Thoroughbred Services, agt. (4) 11,875
Harry L. Landry Bloodstock, agt. (6) 11,167
Bill Reightler, agt. (49) 9,800

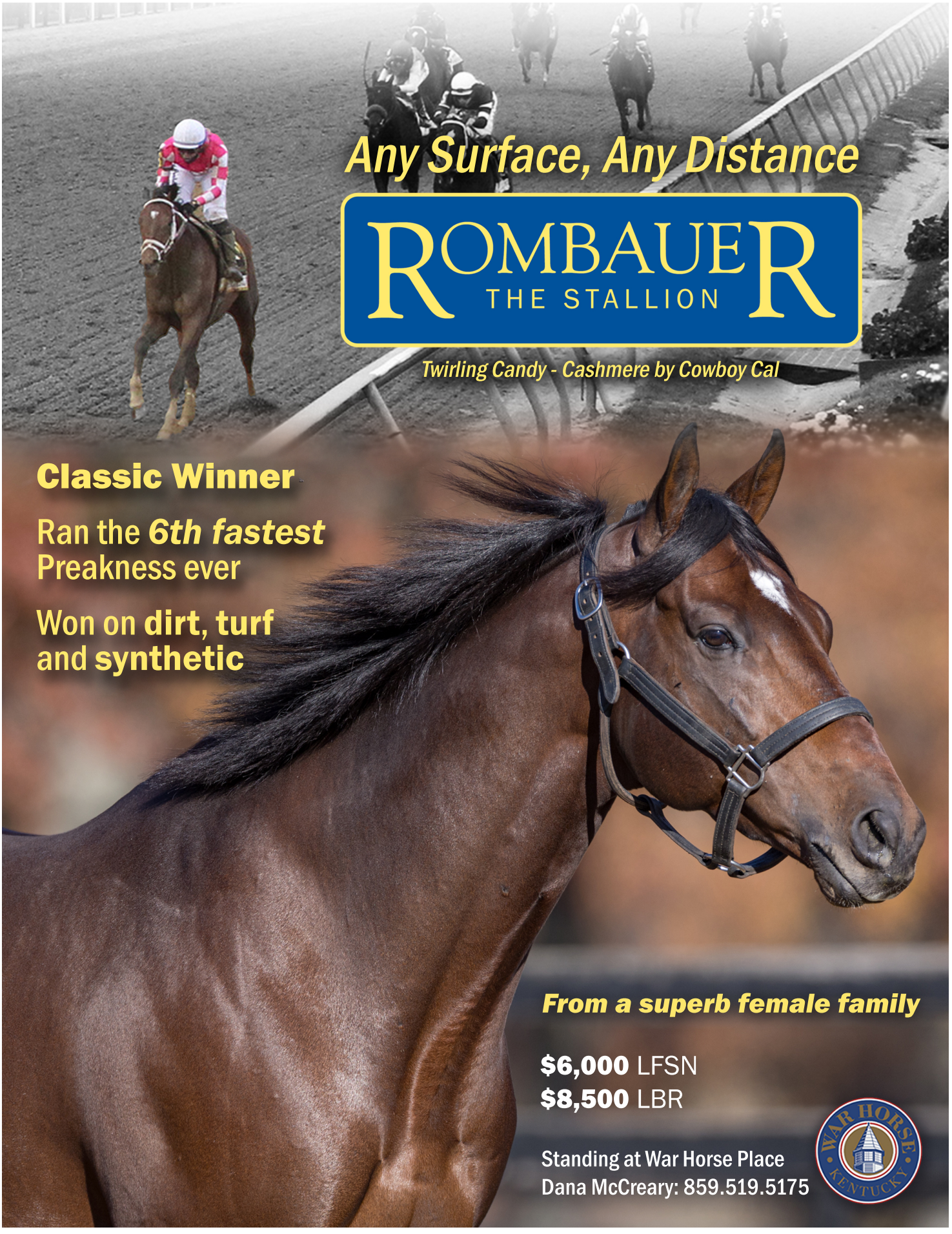
LEADING BUYERS

Machmer Hall (2) $120,000
Flatbird Stable (3) 100,000
Anthony Farrior (8) 87,000
Country Life Farm, agent (2) 70,000
Cash Is King (2) 66,000

LEADING WEANLING SIRES

Gross Sales

Ghostzapper (1) $82,000
Tacitus (2) 48,000
Great Notion (2) 45,000
Vekoma (1) 45,000
Combatant (1) 40,000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> "For people buying broodmares, especially, it's a long-term project, so they have to feel good about things, and right now, there's not a lot of optimism to bring people to Maryland."
>
> *– Consignor Bill Reightler, on how the racing climate affects sales*

Vekoma named C V's Pride sold for $45,000 to Jeff Runco, agent for David Raim, while a filly by Taylor Mountain Farm stallion Candygram named Starlit Music was purchased for $30,000 by Barbara Brown.

"Being by Vekoma, he's part of his second crop, he got a lot of attention," said Reightler. "He's a nice, athletic individual, very good mover, X-rays perfect, had a really nice scope, just exuded quality, and leading up to the sale, we had plenty of activity on that individual."

Sales Notes

The highest-priced racehorse of the sale was Paynter's Prodigy, a 2-year-old gelding who broke his maiden for a $12,500 claiming price on debut at Laurel Park Nov. 11. Sold for $65,000 to Rose Petal Stable at Keeneland September in 2022, he went for $40,000 to Flatbird Stable from the Marshall Silverman consignment . . . The highest-priced yearling was Kentucky-bred Magic Gold, who went for $17,000 to Charles Maffey. The Goldencents filly was consigned by Northview Stallion Station for James F. Thames of Horse Play Racing . . . Thirteen horses sold for $30,000 or more, seven were Mid-Atlantic breds – four Maryland-breds, a Pennsylvania-bred, and two West Virginia-breds. ■

20-year figures from the Fasig-Tipton December mixed sale

Year	*No. sold*	*Average*	*Gross*	*RNAs*	*Top Price*	
2023	148	$10,257	$1,518,100	21%	$82,000	wlg.c. by Ghostzapper
2022	172	18,800	3,233,600	25%	$260,000	3yo g. Radical Right (by First Samurai)
2021	261	14,962	3,905,100	21%	$130,000	2yo g. Safalow's Mission (by Mission Impazible)
2020	182	12,888	2,345,600	23%	$195,000	3yo f. Fly On Angel (by Palace Malice)
2019	249	17,605	4,383,700	19%	$450,000	2yo c. Laddie Liam (by Golden Lad)
2018	201	9,508	1,911,100	22%	$87,000	wlg.c. by Peace and Justice
2017	221	11,078	2,448,200	21%	$105,000	3yo c. Carradine (by Grasshopper)
2017	141	6,428	906,400	29%	$70,000	yrlg.c. by Dialed In
2016	104	8,443	878,100	13%	$76,000	yrlg.c. by Curlin
2014	110	8,680	954,800	33%	$60,000	brm. Delaneys Star (by Latent Heat), in foal to Majestic Warrior
2013	133	11,404	1,516,700	28%	$100,000	3yo f. Mystic Love (by Not For Love)
2012	140	8,216	1,150,200	28%	$100,000	wlg.f. by Read the Footnotes
2011	260	14,382	3,739,350	23%	$260,000	brm. Salty Romance (by Salt Lake), in foal to Cosmonaut
2010	158	6,127	968,100	43%	$130,000	Baltimore Belle, 07 f., by Bowman's Band
2009	169	4,593	776,300	37%	$95,000	brm. Crystal Bull (by Holy Bull), in foal to Pollard's Vision
2008	186	6,287	1,169,400	37%	$65,000	brm. Colonial Ball (by Pleasant Colony), in foal to Henny Hughes
2007	287	7,166	2,056,500	39%	$62,000	wlg.c. by Golden Missile
2006	338	7,924	2,678,300	34%	$95,000	wlg.c. by Tapit
						wlg.c. by Two Punch
2005	375	9,328	3,497,900	32%	$140,000	brm. Your Out (by Allen's Prospect), in foal to Lion Hearted
2004	363	10,640	3,862,300	21%	$160,000	wlg.c. by Malibu Moon

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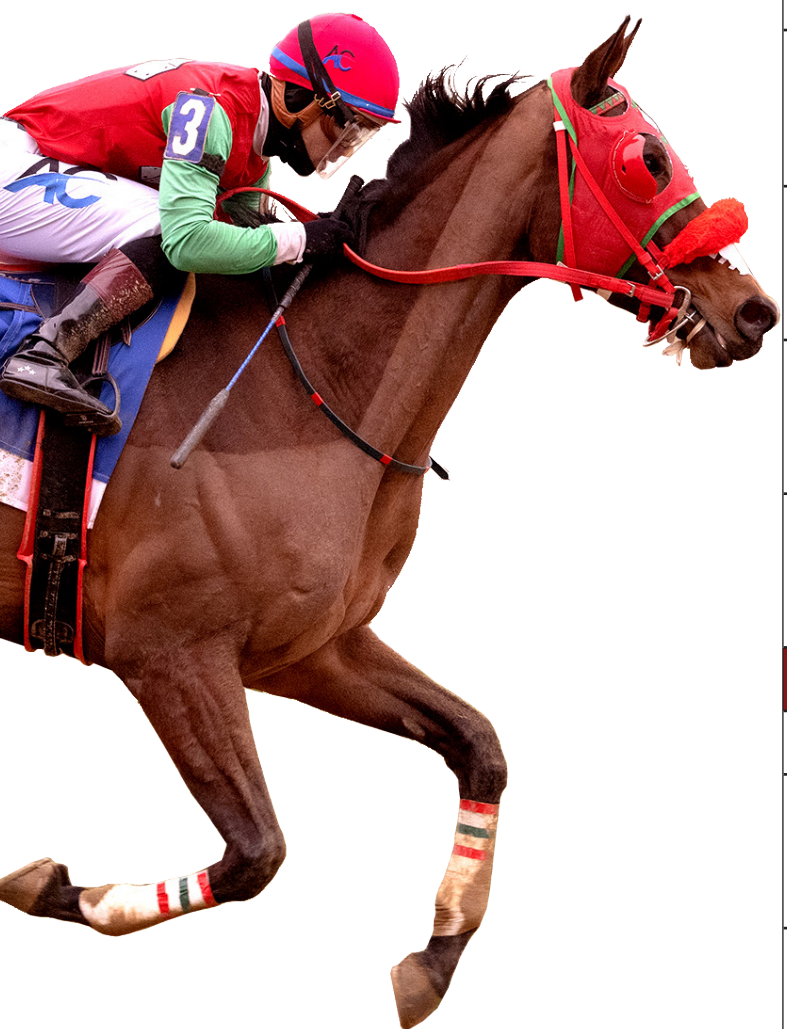

SAT / JAN 20 — $350,000 IN PURSES

STAKES CLOSING ➡ SAT/JAN 6

$100,000 GUARANTEED
THE WHAT A SUMMER STAKES
Fillies and Mares - Four Year Olds and Upward // Six Furlongs

$100,000 GUARANTEED
THE FIRE PLUG STAKES
Four Year Olds and Upward // Six and One Half Furlongs

$75,000 GUARANTEED
THE JENNINGS STAKES (MD BRED/MD SIRED)
Four Year Olds and Upward // One Mile

$75,000 GUARANTEED
THE GEISHA STAKES (MD BRED/MD SIRED)
Fillies and Mares - Four Year Olds and Upward // One Mile

SAT / JAN 27 — $200,000 IN PURSES

STAKES CLOSING ➡ SAT/JAN 13

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Fillies - Three Year Olds // Six Furlongs

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THE SPECTACULAR BID STAKES
Three Year Olds // Seven Furlongs

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Hope in a Horse

UNLIKELY NORTH CAROLINA-BRED DELIVERS FOR OWNER, BREEDER

By Alicia Hughes

The best transaction Art Bauer has been part of during his time in the Thoroughbred industry is commemorated by six quarters in a frame alongside a photo of its rarified subject matter.

As a small breeder in Waxhaw, N.C., Bauer mostly engages in the commercial marketplace as a passion project – which is why he only charged his client-turned-friend Gerard Eckhardt $1.50 for the dark bay filly out of She's Stylish in April 2020.

At the time, Eckhardt was reeling from his first experience with racing's penchant for heartbreak and, in an attempt to ease the anguish, Bauer wanted the resident of Charlotte to realize his longtime aspiration of becoming the owner of a Thoroughbred racehorse.

And so, six quarters were handed over, 50 cents each for Bauer, his wife Lauretta and their veterinarian Dr. Alexis Sage. The transaction ended up enriching the lives of all involved in a way that defies value.

"If you're fortunate enough to get this horse to come out of the gate on a track in a race, you will not care if that horse turns around and runs backward," Bauer said to Eckhardt about becoming an owner. "It will be one of the best days of your life."

Bauer insists he wasn't overselling the experience.

"Look up the statistics of how many horses get to the track," he said. "The odds are not terrific."

When it comes to long odds, seeing a North Carolina-bred show up in the entries qualifies as a white whale in Thoroughbred racing. Hence, the fact Hartful Hope – the filly who inspired the aforementioned transaction – has carried the colors of Eckhardt's Jimmer Racing partnership to four wins from 12 starts thus far represents the manifestation of the improbable.

Since 2001 when there were 47 registered state-bred foals, the impact of the North Carolina Thoroughbred breeding program has dwindled into the single digits. According to statistics from The Jockey Club, Hartful Hope is one of just six North Carolina-breds registered in 2020 and the only one to make it to the races.

Adding to the scarcity is that the now 4-year-old daughter of Central Banker was produced from Bauer's two-broodmare band and is the first and thus far only horse Eckhardt has owned and campaigned. On those merits alone, her tale is one to be marveled at.

When you add in breadth and depth of the backstory that brought her connections into her orbit, you end up with a yarn bordering on the fantastical.

"I never in my wildest dreams thought I would own a horse, this is a dream come true," Eckhardt said. "I never thought I'd own a horse; never thought I'd own a winning racehorse. It's been a dream, that's the only way I can describe it."

Impactful Success

When Hartful Hope broke her maiden fourth time out at Horseshoe Indianapolis this past May, Eckhardt said it was a good 15 minutes before he could regain his breath and stem the flow of tears rolling down his cheeks.

It was also one in a string of times the filly has caused her owner to be overwhelmed in the best sense.

Growing up in Western Pennsylvania and cheering on his father's picks during their trips to old Waterford Park – now better known as Mountaineer – Eckhardt fostered wistful hopes of having a horse of his own showing up in the winner's circle. His grandfather showed him how to read the *Daily Racing Form* and his love for the sport continued to grow, but it wasn't until four years ago that Eckhardt and his cousins, George and Dan Eckhardt, began having real talks about forming a modest racing partnership.

Right around that same time, Eckhardt ran into Sage, an old friend from Pennsylvania, at church. In their subsequent catch-up discussions, Eckhardt learned that one of Sage's veterinary clients – Bauer – had recently obtained the Thoroughbred mare Banner Queen. And she was due to foal soon. When Eckhardt met Bauer and expressed an interest in purchasing the foal, a handshake agreement was reached to give Eckhardt right of first offer.

"I just loved [horse racing] and I always dreamed when I was a child that one day I would own a racehorse," Eckhardt said. "Alexis ended up introducing me to Art and I got to meet Banner Queen and I thought, 'Oh my gosh, this is crazy.' I told him my cousins and I were interested in the foal because Banner Queen was bred to Friend Or Foe who has some bloodlines back to Secretariat, and that got us all fired up.

"Unfortunately, Banner Queen toward the end of her term collapsed."

It's one thing to logically know about racing's highs and lows, it's quite another when the latter smacks you in the face. While Banner Queen survived and was able to deliver, her foal died shortly after birth, leaving a despondent Eckhardt to believe his lifelong aspiration had also passed.

When he moved from New York to North Carolina 10 years ago, Bauer got involved in the state's breeding program mostly for the enjoyment of being able to look out his back window and see would-be racehorses growing and thriving under his care. He wanted Eckhardt to experience a similar joy, so he offered to let him have the subsequent foal out of his other mare, She's Stylish, for an exceptionally modest fee.

"I felt terrible losing the foal for him. To me, it was just like, 'Can this guy get a break?' " Bauer said of Eckhardt. "I had this other foal coming from She's Stylish and my wife and I and our vet, Alexis, were in on that foal. So, I said, 'Let's give him that foal.' And it's just worked out great.

"It's been great not only for Gerard, but it's been cathartic for me," Bauer continued. "And for 'Hope' too. She's been

"When I gave Art those quarters, he said to me the only thing I had to promise him was that I would try and get her to the racetrack."

– Owner Gerard Eckhardt, about his $1.50 "purchase" of three-time winner Hartful Hope

lucky enough to have a person who cares about the health and well-being of a horse, and he has done that with her since the day he got her. She's a lucky horse and if anybody in this world deserves luck and success, it's Gerard."

Overcoming Obstacles

Coping with grief and setbacks is something Eckhardt had too much experience with long before he faced the ache of what might have been with Banner Queen's foal. An auto accident in 1979 left him confined to a wheelchair. When he ran into Sage that day in church four years ago, he informed her that his son's half-brother had just passed away unexpectedly.

Add to that the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and emotional salves were much needed. As Hartful Hope grew and started early work at South Carolina's Camden Training Center, Eckhardt became a full-on doting owner relishing his mission of simply getting his one-horse stable to the track.

"I worked in corporate America, but I haven't really worked since 2005," Eckhardt said. "I got downsized and it was a bad situation the way that went down. But it allowed me to retire. And now, being blessed with this horse has sort of been my job. It's a job of love now. I'm not collecting a paycheck, it's a job I'm spending some money on, but I love it. I would go and see her a lot when she was little . . . and I'm learning something new every day.

"When I gave Art those quarters, he said to me the only thing I had to promise him was that I would try and get her to the racetrack. And I said, 'You got it.' Now he and his wife, they have the quarters in a frame with a little picture of Hartful Hope."

While Hartful Hope was trained by Vicki Oliver through her first six starts, she was transferred to Larry Smith this summer due to financial constraints and the desire to drop the filly into softer company after a pair of off-the-board efforts following her maiden win in May.

With three wins, a second and a third in her final five starts of the year, Hartful Hope provided fresh inspiration for those who aim to keep the state's breeding program going while also pushing her lifetime earnings to $71,208 (all in 2023). Hartful Hope won two allowance races in September at Ohio's Belterra Park, finished second and third in November starts at Mahoning Valley and then landed a non-winners of four allowance at Mahoning Valley Dec. 18.

"I'm real excited about her. I definitely follow her career and I'm personally very proud of her," said Rebecca Montaldo, president of the North Carolina Thoroughbred Association. "It's wonderful our members are having that kind of success with a North Carolina-bred, it's almost unheard of. Most of our breeders, their mares are in Kentucky because there is no incentive here to breed.

"And Gerard is just so excited. I don't know how he hasn't had a heart attack yet watching some of those races."

Having successfully fulfilled a dream that nearly came to a crushing halt, Eckhardt now has a couple more goals. First, he wants to see Hartful Hope race in person. In the long term he wants to help bring live racing to the Tar Heel state. North Carolina hosts two steeplechase meets – Tryon at Columbus and the Queen's Cup at Mineral Springs near Charlotte – each spring, but there is no racetrack.

"That's my next project," Eckhardt laughed. "We just passed the gambling bill so it's possible now. But that might be more difficult than getting Hartful Hope to the races."

Difficult yes, but that's no deterrent for Eckhardt now. Not since he's experienced firsthand how even the most exceptional of circumstances in Thoroughbred racing can produce a reality that dwarfs even the most wondrous of hopes.

"For me, it's all about seeing the happiness this has all brought to Gerard," Bauer said. "He's someone who deserves it more than most in this world." ■

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Candy Ride (Arg)–Church Camp, by Forest Camp

Harlan's Holiday–Unbridled Girl, by Unbridled

Denis of Cork

STAKES-SIRING SON OF HARLAN'S HOLIDAY

11% BLACK-TYPE HORSES include **B'S WILD CORK** ($255,202), **ROMANTIC CORK** ($242,776), **RETURN TO DENIS** ($216,308), **SCOTTISH DENIS** ($206,293), **I NEED YOU**, and leading earner **Late in the Game ($281,039),** etc.

A G3 winner of $613,252, **twice classic-placed** (2nd G1 Belmont S, 3rd G1 Kentucky Derby). From the family of classic winner **DA' TARA**. **Private Contract**

Juba

TOP WV SIRE FOR 2023

The 2023 leader by % winners/runners, number of stakes horses and AE/starter. Lifetime AE/starter $53,219. 15 black-type earners, 13 as 2YOs, including **HESSICA** ($268,298), **FANCY HER UP** ($230,266) and 2023 2-year-old sensation **JUBAWITHATWIST** (4 wins, 3 stakes, in 6 starts) and 2023 WV Lottery Breeders Classic winner **JUBA'S HAT TRICK** (5 wins in 6 starts at 3). NY allowance-winning son of sire of sires **TAPIT**, from a sire family**. $1,000 LFSN**

Tapit–Adoradancer, by Danzig Connection

The Steeplechase Times

The Long Game

VETERAN SCHOODIC RETURNS TO LEAD TIMBER RANKS

By Sean Clancy ■ *Photograph by Douglas Lees*

Run the numbers.

Eleven seasons, 47 starts, 36 stakes tries, 15 wins, 10 stakes wins, 14 jockeys, 15 racecourses, $564,760 earned for two owners.

One horse.

Schoodic added to his legend with two stakes wins this fall at age 13. Owned by Dolly and Dr. John Fisher, trained by their son, Jack, and ridden by Graham Watters, he garnered the National Sporting Library and Museum Cup Stakes at Virginia Fall Oct. 14 and the International Gold Cup at Great Meadow Oct. 28. The double clinched the National Steeplechase Association's timber championship for the son of Tiznow who earned $76,260 to best his older rival – yes, year older rival – Mystic Strike by $4,060.

And to think, it nearly didn't happen.

"The reason he ran this year was because of me," said Dr. Fisher. "Last August, he bowed the extensor tendon on his right hind. He pulled the fibers, but it's an extensor tendon and it's behind. Jack said we'll give him the year off and we'll come back. I said, 'Wait a second, if you give him the year off, he'll be back in 2024. I have no doubt that he'll be here in 2024, but I have significant doubt that I'll be here in 2024 so to hell with that idea.' "

A former veterinarian, trainer and amateur steeplechase jockey (who won two Maryland Hunt Cups), Fisher asked Dr. Mark Donaldson to scan Schoodic, who vacations on the Fishers' Chester County, Pa., farm during his down time.

"We could see it, it was significant, we kept scanning and it closed in, closed in, closed in. By January, February, both Mark and I agreed that you could hardly see that anything was there," Fisher said. "I felt like it was worth taking a chance, the only thing he can do is re-bow and don't forget it's the hind leg, it's not a flexor, it's not a tendon that's used in that way. In May, it was hardly there, almost completely gone."

By September, Schoodic was back, rallying to finish second with Whitney Schweizer in an apprentice-jockeys timber race at Shawan Downs in Maryland. By October, he was completely back, staving off former stablemate Cracker Factory (GB) at Glenwood Park and again at Great Meadow in Virginia.

"He was sensational. Schoodic was sensational," Fisher said. "He was a bear with Cracker Factory at Middleburg and did the same thing at the Gold Cup. Graham said anybody could have ridden him that day, he was just galloping around having a good time. I do recognize that the field at the Gold Cup wasn't the same field as when you had Andi'amu (Fr) and so forth, but still, it's a Gold Cup and there he is."

It was Schoodic's second International Gold Cup victory, to go with a Virginia Gold Cup win in 2021. For the family, the win added to a long list. The Fishers teamed up to win the Virginia Gold Cup with French import *Juggernaut II (with Jack aboard) in 1981 and Jack has added to the Gold Cup haul with the likes of Call Louis, Push and Pull, Saluter, Bubble Economy, Doc Cebu and now Schoodic.

Bred in Kentucky by Pennsylvanian Edie Dixon, long a Fisher friend and client with her late husband Fitz, Schoodic was destined for different things. His dam, the Hennessy mare Aunt Henny, cost $285,000 as a 2-year-old and won two stakes for Dixon and trainer Michael Matz. A foal of 2010, Schoodic made five flat starts for Matz in 2012 and 2013 (managing a third at Delaware Park as a 2-year-old) before moving to Dixon's steeplechase string. Seven months after his final flat start, he won his hurdle debut at Far Hills and backed

At 13 and still going strong, timber veteran Schoodic gallops to victory in the International Gold Cup.

up that victory with another win at Camden to claim the NSA 3-year-old hurdle crown. The bay gelding won twice more in 2014 (including the Mickey Walsh Stakes for novices at Saratoga), placed in a Grade 1 in 2015 and added solo stakes tallies in 2016 and 2017.

When he embarked on his timber career in 2019, Schoodic transferred to the Fishers' ownership. As he did over hurdles, he won his first three that spring and added two stakes wins in the fall. In 17 starts over timber through 2023, he has finished worse than third twice – fading to fifth on summer ground at Middleburg during Covid in 2020 and slipping and falling on the turn at My Lady's Manor the following spring. In all, he has won nine times over the stiffer fences while rising into the top 15 earners in U.S. steeplechase history.

As for keeping that going . . .

"I don't want to think about next year. I guess we'll have a chat about it," Fisher said. "He's back on the farm. For Dolly and me, it's just having him here. He's a personality. He's got a great personality. I go down and feed him every morning and there he sits, doing whatever. It's a great, exciting time for both of us."

Once a bustling training operation, the Fishers' farm now houses two horses. The one and only Schoodic and his friend, Bold Quest, a four-time winning son of Super Saver who retired in 2022.

"Jack sent another horse up here who I thought was picking on Schoodic," Fisher said. "Bold Quest is great, he's a perfect babysitter. They're great fun to have here. It's special."

As for the feeling of winning, Fisher – whose Maryland Hunt Cup victories came aboard Landing Party in 1969 and 1971 and who trained several graded stakes winners on the flat before retiring in 2010 – says it hasn't waned.

"The thrill is still there," he said. "When you're riding them, in the Hunt Cup, that's a whole a different level completely, but owning a nice, good timber horse, or a nice horse of any kind is hugely exciting. It's something you don't forget. It stays with you." ■

The Steeplechase Times

Full Count

JUMP RACING MADE 38 STOPS THROUGH 10 STATES TO CLOSE UP AND DOWN 2023

By Sean Clancy ■ *Photographs by Tod Marks*

Aiken to Aiken and everything in between. The 2023 National Steeplechase Association season began at its traditional South Carolina opener in March and finished there in November. The jumpers hit a total of 38 spots along the way. Tennessee's Iroquois Steeplechase anchored the spring. Saratoga and Colonial Downs highlighted the summer in New York and Virginia, respectively. New Jersey's Far Hills Races buoyed the fall.

Five horses split the five Grade 1 stakes during the season.

Purse money bounced back to a healthy $5,883,625, a slight rise from 2022 and a massive leap from post-Covid and mid-Covid lows of 2021 and 2020.

Here's a by the numbers look at the 2023 season.

1 With a haul of $569,450, Irv Naylor led all owners in 2023. The Marylander returned at the top for the first time since 2016, earning his seventh title. Naylor loomed closer to the all-time leader Augustin Stable, inactive since 2018. The green and white halves led the yellow and white chevron by a mere $45,429.

In 2023, Belfast Banter (Ire) led the way for Naylor, securing the A.P. Smithwick Memorial-G1 at Saratoga. Bercasa (Ire) and Gold Charm (Ire) picked up filly and mare stakes during the summer. McTigue (Ire) flourished with a win in the Jonathan Kiser novice stakes at Saratoga. Withoutmoreado (Ire) collected $60,000 by winning the Maryland Hunt Cup, long a target of this former amateur jockey owner. Although winless at the top level, Scorpion's Revenge (Ire) contributed $61,800.

Focusing a bit more on quality over quantity, Naylor sent out 49 starters, the lowest amount for him since 2005.

2 Jockey Graham Watters won his second championship. The 2021 champion returned to the top of the wins and earnings lists, despite missing two and a half months with broken vertebra from a fall at the Virginia Gold Cup in May. The British-born jockey won 23 races from 87 rides, winning stakes with Snap Decision, Cool Jet (Ire), Kiyomori, Lightning Ridge, Schoodic and Welshman.

Watters won with 11 of his last 20 rides to best Harrison Beswick by six wins. Amateur Freddie Procter finished third with 14 wins. Gerard Galligan placed fourth with 10 wins. Jamie Bargary, Parker Hendriks and Barry John Foley tied for fifth with nine wins apiece.

3 Fashion Line won three times in 2023, the most of any horse on the circuit. Owned by Armata Stable and

trained by Kathy Neilson, the son of Morning Line won over timber at My Lady's Manor, Winterthur and Virginia Fall. The dark bay was bred in Kentucky by longtime steeplechase enthusiast Maggie Bryant, who died in 2021. Bryant campaigned Fashion Line's dam Well Fashioned, a Virginia-bred daughter of Cozzene, who won three stakes over hurdles.

4 Jack Fisher passed $1 million in earnings for 2023, creeping ever closer to the all-time leader Jonathan Sheppard. Fisher is $4,630,903 behind. At this rate, that's five strong seasons...

5 Five horses lie ahead of Snap Decision on the all-time leaderboard. The 9-year-old won twice from five starts to pocket $151,500 and inch up the ladder behind McDynamo, Good Night Shirt, Lonesome Glory, Demonstrative and Divine Fortune. By winning the Temple Gwathmey-G2 and Zeke Ferguson-G2 this year, Snap Decision passed Rowdy Irishman, Sur La Tete, Mixed Up and Victorian Hill on the leaderboard. For all its foreign influence, American steeplechasing's top 10 career earners were all bred in the United States.

6 The Eclipse Award candidate list reached six in 2023. And, wow, the sextet offered a conundrum. Best horse? Best season? Best effort? Best race?

We'll go one by one. In alphabetical order.

Owned by Riverdee Stable and Ten Strike Racing, **Awakened** began the season in allowance company, finishing third at Middleburg and winning at Radnor. The Kentucky-bred son of Curlin finished second in the Jonathan Kiser novice at Saratoga before winning the Jonathan Sheppard-G1 at Saratoga. Scratched because of soft ground at Far Hills, he came back to finish third behind Snap Decision in the Ferguson at the International Gold Cup. Two wins, a second and two thirds for $132,500. One Grade 1 score. Third or better in each of his starts. He beat Merry Maker (Ire) twice. He lost to Snap Decision in their only meeting.

Naylor's **Belfast Banter** finished 23¾ lengths behind Snap Decision in the Temple Gwathmey, came back to finish third in the David Semmes-G2 and crushed eight rivals in the Smithwick at Saratoga. The leader in the clubhouse at that time, that's where he stayed after an injury curtailed the rest of his season. Trained by Cyril Murphy, the Irish-bred earned $110,000 in a shortened campaign.

Merry Maker earned the earnings title with two wins, a second, a third and a fourth for $180,000. Owned by Hurricana Farm and trained by Arch Kingsley, the 6-year-old began the season in allowance company, winning at the Virginia Gold Cup. At Saratoga, he finished third in the Kiser and fourth in the Sheppard. Three weeks after the Sheppard, he upset the Lonesome Glory-G1 while in receipt of 20 pounds from Snap Decision, fourth that day. In the richest race of the season, Merry Maker ranged into contention on the turn in the $250,000 American Grand National-G1 before finishing second, 5¼ lengths behind Noah And The Ark (Ire). Earnings title. One Grade 1 win. Second in the Grand National.

Keystone Thoroughbreds' **Noah And The Ark** showed up on the sport's biggest day and demolished seven rivals in the Grand National. Trained by Todd McKenna, the 9-year-old did what last year's champion Hewick (Ire) did, winning

the Grand National. That's on the plus side. On the minus side, Noah And The Ark missed the board in all three of his other starts, fifth in the Iroquois, fourth in the Smithwick and eighth in the Sheppard. It doesn't seem right to get penalized for a full campaign, but it certainly works against him. Cool horse. Best story. Awesome performance when it mattered most.

Scaramanga (Ire). Do you vote for the European Breeders' Cup winner? The one-and-done interloper who shines on a big day? Scaramanga did just that, winning the Iroquois-G1 over Snap Decision at equal weights. Before that, he lost at Cheltenham. After that, he lost at Galway. On form, the Iroquois is a beacon of light. But is it enough light? Trained by Willie Mullins for Malcolm Denmark, the son of Mastercraftsman (Ire) was this year's Hewick. Yes? No? Maybe?

Snap Decision. The champion without a belt. The Kentucky-bred 9-year-old dominated the Grade 2 Temple Gwathmey to start the year and the Grade 2 David Ferguson at the end of the year. In between, the bookshelf had holes. Second in the Iroquois was solid if not stellar. Off a summer break for Fisher and Bruton Street-US, he was fourth in the Lonesome Glory while giving 20 pounds to the winner. Then came a pull up on soft ground in the Grand National. That one looks the worst on his form, the three dashes are blemishing no matter the reason. The only horse to win two unrestricted hurdle stakes in 2023 was third on the earnings table, but at least a dozen points above everyone on the NSA ratings board. Many felt like he should have won it over Hewick in 2022. Does he get the make-up vote? You certainly couldn't argue it.

Any clearer? Yeah, that's the conundrum. By the time you read this, the Eclipse Awards votes will be in. The award gets presented Jan. 25.

7 There won't be a seventh missed Colonial Cup. The Grade 1 finale returns in 2024. Canceled in 2017, run in the spring in 2018, the Grade 1 stakes was lost completely for six years. Founded in 1970 to help save the game, the classic provides a proper denouement to a sport that desperately needed it. See above.

8 Seasons for Barry John Foley. The likeable veteran wound up on the sidelines after a crushing fall schooling in the summer. Foley won 51 races after joining the American jockey colony.

9 Years since an American-bred won the Eclipse Award. This year, Awakened and Snap Decision are the only two who could break that cycle.

10 Leslie Young won her second consecutive trainers' title, by 10 wins over Jack Fisher. The Pennsylvania-based trainer unleashed 146 starters, winning 33 races.

11 Withoutmoreado won the Maryland Hunt Cup by nearly 11 lengths. The span was 10¾ lengths to be exact. Owned by Naylor, trained by Kathy Neilson and ridden by Conor Tierney, the Irish-bred outstayed Royal Ruse in the 4-mile classic.

DOUGLAS LEES

12 Willie Mullins placed 12th on the trainers' earnings table with $120,000. The multiple Irish champion sent out one horse, Scaramanga, during the season. Malcolm Denmark's 8-year-old won the Iroquois in May. Irish-based Gordon Elliott finished 13th on the list after winning three of six, all at Far Hills in October.

13 Wins by American-born apprentice jockeys in 2023. Virginia Korrell tallied four times. Teddy Davies won three. Mell Boucher, Elizabeth Scully and Brett Owings notched two apiece. The sport's leaders deserve credit for revitalizing an apprentice jockey program a few seasons ago.

14 Mystic Strike won the Virginia Gold Cup at 14. Trained by McKenna for Upland Partners, the son of Smart Strike won for the 15th time (flat and jump) in a 50-race career going

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Multiple stakes-winning son of **DANZIG**, out of multiple graded stakes winner **ANNIE EDGE (Ire).**

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back to his career debut at Calder in June 2012. He'll be hunting this winter with a possible return in the spring.

15 Schoodic won his 15th career race, taking the International Gold Cup to clinch a timber championship at age 13. Andi'amu (Fr) won the Middleburg Hunt Cup in the spring for his 15th career tally. Stars.

16 Tentatively scheduled spring meets. The ever-elusive Fair Hill Spring Races are included on that list. Will there ever be another Fair Hill? Every year without it seems to stuff the once-glorious meet further into the has-been bin.

17 Jump races at Colonial Downs this summer. The Virginia oval hosted two filly and mare stakes, a plethora of maiden and handicap races and a $50,000 flat race for horses who had run and not won over jumps at the meet. Bridge building.

18 Abaan made his 18th career start and first over hurdles in a maiden at Colonial Downs in August. Racing for prominent flat owners Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Daigneault Thoroughbreds, the son of Will Take Charge finished second in his debut, won his next start and overcame heavy ground at Far Hills to win the Foxbrook Champion Hurdle novice stakes. Trained in Camden, S.C., by Kate and Bernie Dalton, the $280,000 yearling purchase has his eyes on the Carolina Cup in the spring. Welcome to steeplechasing, the first second career.

19 Sean McDermott won his 19th race as a trainer when Maryland-bred Casamo scored at Montpelier for owner/breeder South Branch Equine. Earlier on the card, Maryland-bred Icandothat scored for owner/breeder Vivian Rall, providing McDermott with a riding/training double. The stable star Who's Counting reached $213,171 in 2023. South Branch's Maryland-bred owns six wins (three on the flat and three over hurdles) in 23 starts. The son of Vancouver (Aus) finished second in the $100,000 John Forbes Memorial on the flat at Far Hills.

DOUGLAS LEES

20 Eye of Gunfighter and Seismic Wave combined for 20 starts over hurdles during the season.

Trained by Larry Smith for Hickory Made Stable and Celtic Venture Stable, Eye of Gunfighter won twice over hurdles and added another 10 starts on the flat to his busy docket. He earned $53,860 in his dual-purpose campaign.

Trained by Neil Morris for Will Russell, Seismic Wave ran at Aiken in March and Charleston in November. The son of Tapit won twice over hurdles in an industrious season.

21 Win percentage for trainer Arch Kingsley. In a career year, the former champion jockey won eight races from 39 starts. The highlight was the cold trifecta in the Grade 1 Lonesome Glory. Merry Maker led stablemates L'Imperator (Fr) and Barbados (Ire) in the $150,000 stakes. The $1 trifecta was worth a cool $304.

22 Consecutive stakes starts by Redicean (GB). The 10-year-old retired at the end of the season. City Dreamer (Ire) was one behind him with 21 consecutive stakes starts. The 10-year-old retired as well.

23 Could the year 2023 be the final one for the Queen's Cup Steeplechase? The North Carolina tradition ran for the 26th time in April. By December, organizers announced that it wouldn't run next year. A classic course for horse and fan, it provided one of the highlights of the spring. What a blow. What can the sport do to bring it back? ■

Virginia has lots of ways to play

Virginia Breeders

NEW Beginning in with foals of 2024, Virginia breeders will earn bonuses for registered Virginia-breds finishing 1st through 3rd in open races in North America (state-bred and state-sired races are excluded except at Colonial Downs and NSA sanctioned meets in Virginia*). Foals must be dropped in Virginia and the foal's dam must reside in Virginia from September 1st, 2023, until foaling the following year. Mares purchased at public sale after September 1st may enter the program if they arrive at a Virginia Facility within fifteen days of the purchase date (60 days if purchased outside of the U.S.).

BONUSES PROJECTED AT 30% OF EARNED PURSES

*Pending VA Commission approval

Virginia-Bred/Sired/ Certified Developers

VA-Certified Developers:

Developers of VA-Certified horses earn up to a 25% bonus for open wins in the Mid-Atlantic region (NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, WV), including NSA-sanctioned meets. VA-Certified Developers earn a 10% bonus for state-bred-restricted races in the Mid-Atlantic region. (Beginning with foals of 2023, bonuses will not be earned for wins in West Virginia).

VA-Bred or Sired Developers:

Beginning with foals of 2021, the developer will earn up to a 25% bonus on wins in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Virginia-Bred/Sired/ Certified Owners

- Owners of VA-bred/sired foals prior to 2021 earn up to a 25% bonus on wins in the Mid-Atlantic region, including NSA-sanctioned meets.
- Owners of VA-bred/sired foals earn a 50% bonus on purses 1st-4th in all open races at Colonial Downs.
- Increased purses for VA-Restricted races at Colonial Downs.
- VA-Restricted stakes and VA-Bred & VA-Sired stakes at Colonial Downs with up to $150,000 purses.
- Certified developer awards are not earned for out-of-state wins during the Colonial Downs race meet

See VaBred.org for program details

Or contact the Virginia Thoroughbred Association at 434-977-3716

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— In Memoriam —

Life in Full Color

TRAINER, TALE-TELLER BLUSIEWICZ DIES AT 92

By Vinnie Perrone

A sure thing, Leon Blusiewicz called it. Yelled it, practically, through bursts of April wind that rattled Pimlico Race Course's clubhouse doors and clanged the flagpole shackles. In thrilling detail, he spilled the particulars, worked a toothpaste-ad grin and said, "It's a winner. Believe me."

Wise reporters approached him with recorders humming, notebooks open, pens (and extras) poised for all the outrageous pronouncements, daring predictions and audacious appraisals that might gust at any time. Blue – "with or without the e," he offered. "Dealer's choice" – similarly endowed punters, railbirds, dreamers and hangers-on itchy for steam on one of his first-time starters.

This the trainer shared freely and convincingly, even to his pari-mutuel detriment, for Blue relished action on the track and at the window. "They ever take betting away," he once said without a wink, "I'm walkin' out the door."

Doors he never feared to open. The grandson of a horse trainer in Poland, 7-year-old Leon grabbed his father's cuff and found racetrack wonder in the 1938 Seabiscuit-War Admiral match race at Pimlico, ditched high school and gritty East Baltimore at 16 on a steamship for South America and worked as a merchant seaman into his mid-30s before a union stoppage anchored him. Back in Baltimore, he painted bridges, played horses, forged iron, played horses, sold cars, played horses and eventually landed tugboat work towing wounded boats into Baltimore Harbor.

Nine years on the job, he had a car wreck in 1975 and fumed that three missed workdays went unpaid. Wife Irene, sick with cancer then, told him to leave the bayside for the backside. To Blue she sang an angel's song.

The middle-aged hustler with no horse-training knowhow thus began a 40-year extravaganza in racing's Big Tent, his high-wire spectacle filled with daring moves, improbable thrills, lavish displays, startling triumphs. Blue The Entertainer doubled as promoter, impresario, huckster, worked the one-man show into his mid-80s, when he dispatched his last stakes winner and soon retired.

On Nov. 26, 2023, Leon John Blusiewicz died at 92.

None of his racetrack feats might have happened without Irene, whose encouraging words in 1975 propelled him inland. What Blue lacked in training insight he offset with an eye for equine form and movement, a relentless study of pedigree, a bettor's obsession for detail. Scouting workouts at Delaware Park one summer morning in 1969, he'd seen an unraced 2-year-old filly shadow a 2-year-old colt named Foggy Road through a 46-second half-mile. The filly, Gallamar, made Blue's watch list and moved up the page after Foggy Road's near victory in the Saratoga Special that August. Blue trekked to Detroit Race Course for Gallamar's debut, cashed a good bet, tailed her through a 4-for-6 racing career and into retirement.

He saw Gallamar the broodmare as his ticket into racing proper and targeted her second foal, a Florida-bred weanling colt by Peace Corps, Alfred G. Vanderbilt's two-time stakes winner. Blue offered $5,000 for the colt he hadn't seen, shook hands at $7,500 and named his acquisition Isella in tribute to Baltimore maitre d' and neighborhood icon Al Isella. "He was sponsoring kids' football teams and baseball teams," Blue said. "He bought us equipment all the time. If you needed a job, he made sure you got a job. He was always looking to help people."

ADVANCE EDITION
THURSDAY
Racing Form
13 Fillies Clash in Aqueduct's Cl
Answer Tops Dash Stake
Stamen Duo Vs. 8 In Hialeah Sprint Thursday
Americo, Big A Victor
Kettle River Wins Garden Headliner By Nearly Length

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Then, with vintage flair, "The best-looking s.o.b. you ever seen," he said of Isella the man.

From the outset, Blue zealously engaged the toughest racetrack rivals. Isella debuted at Belmont Park in 1977 and finished third, then won a maiden special weight at Bowie that roused the attention of track security officials. Al Isella the maitre d', they said, had ties to bookmaking. They asked Blue about a possible connection.

Suppressing the assurance that Isella the horse was not a bookie, Blue instead played it straight. "Al Isella is my friend," he told investigators. "I have not seen him twice in several years, but he helped me when I was a youngster running around East Baltimore. He helped with money when the house was cold and gave me advice. He cared about me. So when I bought a colt, I thought I'd name him after a man with class, one who isn't getting any younger and rates a thank you from many people, especially from me."

Track officials dropped the case; Blue carried on. The following summer, 1978, he won the Toddler Stakes with Heavy Sugar, owned and bred by restaurateur Buzz Beler. In March 1979, two months after Irene died, Isella took the Native Dancer Handicap at Bowie and Beler's Connecticut-bred Skipat won her first of two Barbara Fritchie Handicaps, then a Grade 3. Later that summer, Blue seized the Toddler again with a homebred of his own, Bluer Than Blue.

Traditionalists bristled: An urban seafarer with no hands-on experience had appeared one day and suddenly, decidedly shaken the stony pillars of time-wrought horsemanship.

Worse, he gabbed and blabbed and foretold wins like a homemade prophet. It had to be a fluke.

Luck spanned five decades, even as Blue's stable never truly teemed in number. Two months after Isella finished a 10-for-30 career, Blue hit the 1980 Keeneland September yearling sale and spent $35,000 on a Washington-bred Royal Ski filly from the Hasty Road mare Mick B Quick. The following fall, after Snow Plow won her first start at Belmont Park, Blue stamped her worthy of the Grade 1 Selima Stakes at Laurel Park. Skeptics derided him for dreaming too big, especially against the Woody Stephens-trained Larida, 2-for-2 and bred to strengthen. Blue spoke delight at the prospect, for Larida's odds-on presence would only sweeten Snow Plow's mutuel. He told the hordes to bet with gusto. Under 16-year-old Jack Kaenel, she returned $19.60 with the victory and $126,501 with the purse.

Two weeks later, Snow Plow took the Grade 1 Demoiselle at Aqueduct.

Blue's Pied Piper magnetism flourished wherever he went. In 1987, Marylanders Bob and Lorraine Quinichett gave him a homebred filly by Assert (Ire) from the Tentam mare Willamae. "This is the best of 'em all," Blue said of Willa On the Move before she won the 1988 Ashland Stakes-G1 at Keeneland.

He deemed no hype too ripe. "He's got dimensions I haven't seen," he said of Tong Po, the Quinichetts' Federico Tesio-G3 winner, in 1991.

"This is the best horse I ever trained," he said of Mighty Magee, a colt 4-for-17 at the time he won the 1995 Annapolis Stakes.

"This is the best-moving horse I've seen in my life since Seattle Slew," he said of Grade 3 winner Millions in 1999, during the colt's 10-race winless streak.

Blue talked. Scribes and bettors listened. In the summer of 2010, he took an unraced Afleet Alex 3-year-old to Saratoga and sought ascension at "the holy place." Blue had spent $260,000 on the yearling Admiral Alex two years earlier, justified the splurge and promised immediate returns for those who believed his newcomer could master 9 furlongs and bluebloods trained by Pletcher and Asmussen, Zito and McLaughlin, Harty and others. Before the program, in-house handicapper Andy Serling told viewers, "If you haven't heard a tip on Admiral Alex in the second race, you must be in a coma." Lined at 10-1, Admiral Alex set off at 5-2 and won by a length.

Seven years later, 86-year-old Blue brought a horse and one more golden-fleece yarn to Aqueduct. Spartiatis, a 7-year-old he trained for Beler, approached the Grade 3 Tom Fool Handicap with more talent than other 4-for-30 runners, Blue declared. A mysterious virus had seized the Scat Daddy gelding the autumn before and brought a shadow-dance with death.

"He's a fighter," Blue said before the knockout. Spartiatis ruled the Tom Fool at 5-1, the trainer's first graded stakes score in 19 years.

Did his touts know any limit? The answer came that windswept day at Pimlico, when the clubhouse doors rattled and flagpole shackles clanged. Amid the clamor, Blue divulged a tip in weights and measures.

A recipe.

"My can't-miss recipe," he said. "Try it if you want the best crabcakes you ever had. It's a winner. Believe me."

~~~

Predeceased by his wife, Irene (nee Wisniewski), son Alexander Lee Leon, three brothers and two sisters, Blusiewicz is survived by twin sister Leona Gelhaus and another sister Sabina Cruise. ■

Blue's Can't Miss Crabcake Recipe

1 pound fresh Maryland backfin jumbo lump crabmeat – "None of that canned stuff."
Montreal Steak Spice – "McCormick's is good."
1 sleeve Keebler Club Crackers – "You can take out a few and eat 'em on the side."
3 tablespoons mayonnaise – "Gotta be Hellmann's."
1 tablespoon spicy brown mustard – "Better than Dijon."
1 egg, beaten.

Place crabmeat in a large bowl, remove all shells and cartilage, add Montreal Steak Spice to taste. Crumble the crackers by hand and mix gently. Blend mayo and mustard, fold in beaten egg, mix until moist. Form crabcakes into 2½-inch mounds and refrigerate until firm, at least 30 minutes.

Cooking options: Broil, pan-fry in butter or deep-fry in vegetable oil until brown.
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— Broker's Tip —

BY RICK ABBOTT

Jonathan

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Much has been said and written over the last few months about the death of Jonathan Sheppard in August. Accounts of his racing achievements abound. His skein of 47 consecutive Saratoga meetings with a winner has been called unbreakable. Like Secretariat and Man o' War, his induction into racing's Hall of Fame in 1990 was a given.

That he continued to train for 30 years after that induction and went on to produce two Eclipse Award winners on the flat to go with his steeplechase accomplishments is testament to his flexibility and genius. This was a man who, in 1968, trained a horse to win the 4-mile Maryland Hunt Cup in Haffaday and in 2009 guided the career of female sprint champion Informed Decision.

There are many prominent horsemen with the first name of Jonathan: Jonathan Smart, a champion steeplechase jockey who won 103 jump races; Jonathan Thomas, a trainer who honed his craft under Christophe Clement and Todd Pletcher and now trains for Sheppard's longtime client Augustin Stable; even Jonathan Pease, the renowned European trainer of classic winners. Be that as it may, in Thoroughbred racing, simply say Jonathan and everyone knows you mean Sheppard.

He had a long and storied career and lived to be 82, but that career and his personal life were not without heartache and tragedy. His son Parker died from an injury sustained in an altercation outside a bar in Durango, Colo., and two of his three marriages ended in divorce. When he retired after his last championship in 2020, he was no longer training for his longtime friends and patrons George Strawbridge and Bill Pape.

On several occasions I have heard Strawbridge tell a story that says a lot about their long relationship. The original racetrack in Erie, Pa., was called Commodore Downs. It was low-level racing, but did feature a few Pennsylvania-bred stakes each season. In search of black type, Jonathan and George decided to enter a filly in one of those races. Jonathan drove the van on the long trip with a groom aboard and, when it was time to pick up Strawbridge at the Erie airport, Jonathan pulled up to the arrivals area in the horse van. George got in and as they drove out of the airport, heard some noise coming from the back of the truck. Jonathan was uncomfortable leaving the filly in the barn area, so he brought her to the airport. Unaffected by the side trip, the filly won and earned her black type. She then accompanied the duo back to the airport before her trainer drove her home to Ashwell Stables.

In later years, when trainers from Parx and Penn National were loath to ship horses to the new slots-infused races at Presque Isle Downs, Jonathan and protégé Graham Motion would plunder the new Erie track's purse account.

The last time I saw Jonathan was at a dinner party at the home of George Harris, Jonathan's partner in the great champion Flatterer. Jonathan told me the following: one night in Saratoga he and Pape had dinner at the Wishing Well outside of town. On the way home Jonathan's driving was erratic enough to get them pulled over by Saratoga's finest. The officer, suspecting they had gone to the Wishing Well for more than its famous corn on the cob, asked Jonathan to accompany him to the station for further questioning and asked Mr. Pape to follow in Jonathan's car. As he and Pape sat on a bench waiting for the bad news, the patrolman returned, handed Jonathan his license and registration and said, "You both can go and, by the way, Mr. Sheppard, good luck in the Sword Dancer tomorrow with With Anticipation." The next day, of course, With Anticipation won his second consecutive Sword Dancer-G1 on his way to career earnings of $2,660,543.

In a 2013 profile in the *Chronicle of the Horse*, Jennifer Calder captured Jonathan's thoughts on his life and his career. She quoted him, "It sounds trite, but that maybe I made a difference in some way? There are a lot of people involved in racing now that came through the stable here at different times or have gone on to train or be involved in some aspect of the horse business and, hopefully, use a little bit of the same philosophy. Not that it's a huge mantra that's written down or anything, but just the fact that you know, to get the best out of a horse, you have to see the best in the horse. How to put the horse first, how to take care of the horses. . .

"I think to be a successful trainer it's several different things: It's not someone who gets the horses fitter than somebody else. You have to be good at communicating with your owners; you have to be good at dealing with your help and staff.

"Consistency, I think consistency is the mark of success, and if you can do something well for a long time – not that you are necessarily the best at any given moment or any one year – but over a long period of time, if you have consistently done well at a top level, that would be something I would be proud of and would hope to continue to do."

To get the best out of a horse, you have to see the best in the horse. . . I wish I had written that. ■

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My grandfather, the outlaw

Small tracks helped launch Fitzsimmons to Hall of Fame

By Bill Fitzsimmons

It's always fun to do family research. You never know what you will discover. While working on my family tree, I discovered that my grandfather, James E. "Sunny Jim" Fitzsimmons, a Hall of Famer whose stable included two Triple Crown winners, rode for the notorious outlaws Frank James and Dick Liddil of the Jesse James Gang, in the 1890s.

But my grandfather was not a member of the James Gang. After James and Liddil were let out of prison, they became prosperous racehorse owners on the East Coast; and my grandfather, a young jockey during this period, rode for both at the so-called outlaw tracks.

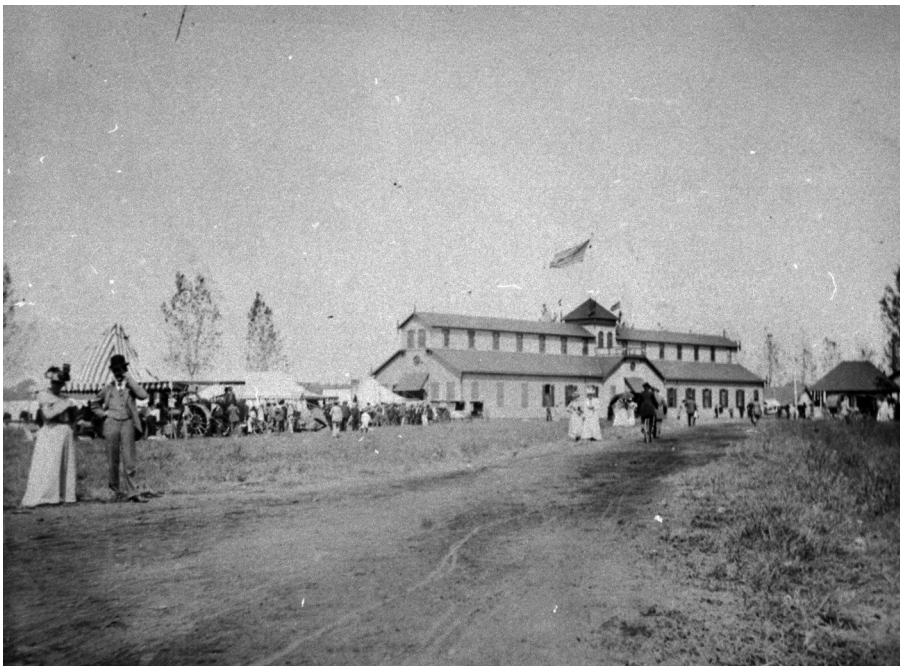
Despite the name, outlaw tracks were not actually illegal racetracks run by outlaws. They were simply not sanctioned by the New York-based Jockey Club, which considered racing a gentlemen's sport; and held those simply trying to make a living from it with disdain. This included, most particularly, William J. Thompson.

In 1890, the Irish-born Thompson (often referred to in the press as the "Duke of Gloucester" because of his great political power in New Jersey) opened a racetrack in Gloucester that operated almost every day except Sundays for three years. Rain, snow, sleet, ice, freezing cold – it didn't matter, the races were held, despite hazards to man and horse. Indeed, the hazards particularly upset the Jockey Club.

On Thanksgiving Day 1893, after many attempts by reformers, the Gloucester track was shut down by the state, and Thompson began looking for a new location. In 1895, he found it in Elkton, in Cecil County, Md.

Keeneland Library Collection

Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons weighed 85 pounds as a young jockey in 1893. The future Hall of Fame trainer rode regularly at Maryland tracks in the late 1800s.



Historical Society of Cecil County

The Elkton Fair Grounds hosted Thoroughbred racing in the late 1800s.

cecilcountyhistory.com

An 1893 postcard was a colorful promotion for fair racing in Elkton.

It was ideal. Maryland allowed racing (and betting) at a racetrack for up to 30 days per year; it was crisscrossed by various train lines; and it was close enough to Philadelphia and Baltimore to assure a reasonably large number of patrons. The timing was also good. After racing was shut down in New Jersey, many outlaw horsemen moved to Alexandria, Va., where the Alexander Island and St. Asaph tracks operated. But, by late 1895, pastors and politicians were in the process of getting the Alexandria racetracks shut down for being immoral and bringing in the "worst sort of people."

Thompson helped form the Maryland Racing Association, headed by Philadelphian Andrew Burns who approached the Cecil County Agricultural Society and offered a large amount of money. The society had the right to run a 30-day meet at the Elkton Fair Grounds in 1895, complete with the rights to "pool selling" or betting. The society had used four days, but the Maryland Racing Association purchased the rights to the remaining 26, did some renovations on the track, the stands and the nearby railroad station, and opened Oct. 21, 1895.

Many locals were incensed, as witnessed by a formal resolution passed by the Cecil County Farmers Club, reported in the Nov. 1, 1895 Midland Journal:

"Resolved: That the directors of the so-called Agricultural Society of Cecil County have, by their recent action in subleasing the racing privileges of the Fair Grounds to an association of gamblers, which association was driven from the soil of New Jersey, and is not allowed to get a foothold in any other state, have transcended the authority granted them by the legislature, have gone contrary to the wishes of the great majority of their constituents, and have forfeited all claims to the support and encouragement of the farming community."

The Cecil Grange passed a similar resolution, but 3,000 paying customers showed up at the fair grounds on opening day, and the game was on.

Flushed with the initial success, Thompson purchased property at nearby Iron Hill, abutting the Delaware border, and began construction of three tracks under a new syndicate, called the Keystone Racing Association. Under Maryland law, a track could only be allowed 30 days of racing. Three tracks (connected to a single stable area) allowed Thompson to triple the schedule. And, since Elkton was a dry town where the sale of alcohol was prohibited, Thompson built his clubhouse (and lucrative bars) just a few feet over the state line, in Delaware.

Burns, meanwhile, operating as head of the Barksdale Racing Association, bought 70 acres near the Barksdale station of the B&O Railroad, 3 miles from Elkton, and began construction of a racetrack there. He later built still another track, Singerly, under the auspices of the so-called Southern Racing Association.

The result, as the Baltimore Sun announced, was year-round racing:

"All-the-year racing in Maryland: It is the purpose of the racing people to put in a full year . . . (of) racing in Cecil County, MD. They have announced that (on) New Year's Day the Barksdale track will open (for 30 days). This will be followed by the three tracks at Iron Hill for a period of 90 days, then Singerly for 30 days, and Elkton for 30 days more."

Elkton had become the center of the sport of outlaw racing in the United States, with 180 days a year. But, many sportswriters questioned whether it was indeed a sport. In 1896, the Buffalo Enquirer printed the following:

"CROOKED TRACK: Iron Hill, MD – Gloucester (racetrack in New Jersey) in its palmiest days never tolerated the barefaced "jobbery" that is witnessed daily at Iron Hill. It is called racing, but there is no racing about it. It is no exaggerating to say that eight races out of every 10 have "shooed in" winners, either by having every horse "fixed" behind him, or by outclassing the field to such an extent that the purse is simply a gift."

The author may have been exaggerating, but a degree of chicanery characterized the outlaw tracks in Elkton. Indeed, the papers of the day were full of stories and rumors about doping, electric buzzers, rigged races and good horses being substituted for bad ones. The most infamous example of the latter involved the January 1898 substitution of the fast horse, Sidney Bender, for the similar looking, but much slower Jersey Boy at Barksdale. The ringer of course won, but the ruse was quickly discovered, and the organizer was ruled off the track.

A lot of money was made at the outlaw tracks, but mainly by the track owners, who tilted the odds. Horsemen, including owners, for the most part, barely got by.

My grandfather had been a young jockey at the Gloucester racetrack, where he had modest success, and where he

met and married my grandmother, Jennie Harvey Fitzsimmons. The high point of his riding career came during the summer of 1893, when he finished second in the Flash Stakes at Saratoga on William T, – a horse named after William Thompson, "The Duke of Gloucester."

With the closure of Gloucester in November 1893, my grandfather traveled to wherever horse races took place. In 1895, he found himself in Alexandria, Va., still a jockey, but gaining weight with my grandmother's cooking, until he primarily rode in what other jockeys sarcastically called "cooks' races" – where he could ride with 110-115 pounds or more, instead of the more common 100-105. He was lucky enough to get out of Virginia with a few dollars, when the racetracks closed.

When he arrived in Elkton in early 1896 (at age 21), he was traveling with my grandmother, two small children, and the racehorse Farragut. The latter addition reflected his decision to start training and because it was difficult to find owners who would entrust their horses to a young trainer, he also became an owner.

Records show that, during his time in Elkton, he owned at least seven racehorses: Farragut, Cheer Up, Lady Linden, St. Pat, False Pride, Duke of Montrose II, and Electro – almost certainly purchased with the help of loans from my grandmother's sister, Lillian, who had married a much more successful jockey, John Tabor.

Tabor rode at the legitimate tracks during this period, with 1896 being a particularly good year. On May 6, while my grandfather was riding and training at the Elkton tracks for $100 purses, Tabor and his mount Ben Eder finished second to Ben Brush in the Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs.

Electro was, by far, my grandfather's most successful horse of the time and he quickly became a runner who "could put pork chops on the family table." With horses costing $50-$100, and the tracks offering purses of $75-$100 per race, he needed a horse who could routinely finish in the money. Electro was it. Of the 33 races for which complete information is available, Electro won 12 times, finished second five times and third once.

As my grandfather's training skills increased, so did Electro's performance. In September 1896, he surprised bettors at Iron Hill by winning at 10-1. By January 1897, he was the crowd favorite at Barksdale, as reported in The Philadelphia Times:

In the last race, at a mile, Electro, a 4-5 favorite (on the strength of his most recent race) galloped away from the field and was pulling up by eight lengths, with the remainder of the field strung out a sixteenth of a mile.

Keeneland Library Cook Collection

Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons trained two Triple Crown winners, William Woodward's Belair Stud homebreds Gallant Fox and Omaha.

Electro's did not make everyone happy, especially the bookmakers, who were losing money on his triumphs. And since some worked for the track owners, and these were of course outlaw tracks, something was done about it: After Electro won in January 1897, judges disqualified the horse, claiming that his jockey weighed in 2½ pounds lighter after the race than he had before – despite not carrying any lead weights that could have fallen out.

This led a sarcastic sportswriter for the Philadelphia Inquirer to devote an entire column to the bad call:

"The disqualification of Electro by the officials at Barksdale on Friday . . . was a fruitful theme of discussion among the followers of the ponies on Saturday . . . The promptness with which the officials acquiesced in the clerk of officials' declaration . . . was suggestive, and their refusal to give either the horse's owner or the public a chance for the benefit of the doubt (by refusing to weigh Neary in on the same scale he weighed out on) made it doubly so . . ."

Similar howls were heard when my grandfather's horse, Cheer Up, easily won a sprint, only to be disqualified by track officials for supposedly interfering with another horse.

Perhaps unhappy with the criticism, officials at Barksdale ruled off Electro for inconsistent performance a few weeks later, when he got stuck in the mud in the midst of one of Barksdale's frequent February quagmires, noting also his recent subpar performance in a snowstorm at Iron Hill. But that was the nature of the outlaw tracks.

Despite these setbacks, my grandfather's horses continued to do well enough to attract the attention of a sportswriter for The Sun (of Wilmington, Del.) who often referred to him as "Ex-jockey Fitzsimmons," in gossipy stories about his horses. This included the following from 1898: "Ex-jockey Fitzsimmons lost a small bet on his horse, Electro. Never mind, there might be another cook's race, and you can ride him yourself."

My grandfather's horses, like most in Elkton, were not Thoroughbred stars. But, Elkton was the training ground that allowed him to improve his understanding of racehorses and his training techniques. Without his time there, it is unlikely he would have later trained such champions as Gallant Fox, Omaha, Johnstown, Nashua and Bold Ruler.

Racing at Elkton continued for well over a year, until the patrons started showing up in smaller numbers and the tracks lost the right to have "foreign books" – bookies taking bets on races at other tracks around the country. This led to lower profits and to bickering among the racing syndicates, including over which syndicate would have which race days, and a reduction in the already small winning purses, the latter leading to strikes by the horsemen.

On June 10, 1897, after 293 days of almost continuous racing at the various Elkton tracks, it was announced in the Delaware Gazette and State Journal that the meet at Iron Hill was being suspended:

"The end of the farcical game in Maryland was reached today when the management of the Iron Hill tracks decided to close racing competition owing to poor patronage. The announcement of the closing, while not totally unexpected, was a blow to the majority of the horsemen, who have been living "hand to mouth" for some time past. What is to become of the thousand or more horses that are now quartered in Cecil County is a matter of conjecture . . ."

And, indeed, there was no racing in Elkton during July, August or September 1897. But this was a possibility the syndicates had planned for; and they simply moved to two newly refurbished racetracks in the Baltimore area: Pros-

Photo courtesy of Belair Stable Museum

Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons feeds Triple Crown winner Gallant Fox at Saratoga in 1930.

pect Park and Herring Run. The newspapers of the day show that the outlaw horsemen all moved with their horses for the summer of 1897. This included my grandfather, who did quite well. On July 9, 1897, shortly before his 23rd birthday, he rode three winners at Prospect Park, including Electro. And, on Aug. 30, 1897, he again rode Electro to victory, this time as the 4-5 favorite at Herring Run, while also scoring a second and a third in other races the same day.

On Oct. 4, 1897, racing at Elkton started again, and continued for seven more months – even after a boycott by the outlaw horsemen in November 1897, following a decision by Singerly to reduce the purse per race from $100 to $75. With the syndicates making smaller profits, they also put less money into track maintenance, and horsemen had to put up with increasingly poor and often hazardous track conditions. Indeed, the track conditions at Barksdale were so bad in January 1898 that the scheduled races had to be moved to Singerly. In reaction, the Brooklyn Citizen decried "…(the) disgraceful (and hazardous) enterprise that this Maryland outlaw racing had degenerated into."

It all finally did come to an end in April 1898 when Maryland State Senator Austin Carothers, with help from the Law and Order League introduced a bill to effectively shut down racing in Cecil County; and, with broad support, it was passed into law. A group called the Society for the Suppression of Vice wanted racing made illegal everywhere in the state, but a bill introduced to that effect failed to pass.

The last Maryland outlaw races were held April 2, 1898, at the same place they had begun in 1895, the Elkton Fair Grounds. On that day, my grandfather's horse, Lady Linden, who had two wins and a second in the previous seven days, added a win in a 1-mile race, twice around the half-mile track. On April 1, False Pride also won, easily defeating his competition in a 6-furlong race by 4 lengths.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch noted the anticipated effect of the new anti-racing law:

"With the abolition of Barksdale, Singerly and Iron Hill, the last chance the outlaws had of eking out a poor existence has vanished . . . There is not a single port on earth into which the turf outlaws can sail safely."

The death of outlaw racing was greatly exaggerated. Instead, the outlaws headed to Pennsylvania, to the Eagle track in Manoa, near Philadelphia – a fact noticed by the Philadelphia Inquirer:

"The race horse owners, bookmakers and touts who were driven from Maryland and New Jersey . . . have been doing business at the Eagle track in the same old way . . . The track was leased by a half a dozen sporting men, but who they are has been kept a secret."

My grandparents were there, traveling to Pennsylvania with three children (the third was born in Elkton in September 1897), and a handful of horses, including Electro, Farragut, False Pride and Lady Linden.

There was no racing in Elkton between 1898 and 1934, when William duPont opened the well-appointed Fair Hill steeplechase course. Recognized for its quality, the Fair Hill course was way beyond anything the outlaws could have imagined.

In September 1936, eight years after Maryland's outlaw tracks had closed, the Lexington Herald-Leader noted that the Fair Hill course represented a new start for racing in Elkton:

"The old town Elkton will see racing this afternoon. (It will be held at) . . . William duPont's beautiful Fair Hill steeplechase course, located near that city, and on whose two-lap tracks in the 1890s "Sunny Jim" Fitzsimmons did some of his best riding . . . many a successful trainer of today was then but little known as a jockey, or even as a young trainer, and raced at those 'outlaw tracks.' " ❧

The youngest grandchild of Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons, Bill Fitzsimmons is a resident of Potomac, Md., and Saratoga Springs, N.Y. The native of Brooklyn, N.Y., retired from a career with the National Institutes of Health where he was the executive officer for the National Institute of Mental Health.

Maryland Fund Stakes Recaps

Jim McCue (2)

Circle P

Maryland Juvenile Championship Stakes
$100,000-guaranteed, 7 fur., registered Maryland-bred or sired 2-year-olds.
Laurel Park, Dec. 2.

B.g., 2021, Speightster—Quiet Inferno, by Quiet American. Bred by Marathon Farms Inc.; owned by DeSales 85; trained by Flint Stites. Foaled at Marathon Farm, Sparks, Md.

				Lifetime
starts	*1st*	*2nd*	*3rd*	*earnings*
4	2 (1)	1	1	$101,990 (through Dec. 2)

2023: 1st $100,000 **Maryland Juvenile Championship S**, 7 fur., registered Md.-bred or sired 2-year-olds, Laurel, Dec. 2.

Peter Angelos' Marathon Farm in Sparks, the former Ross Valley Farm which he purchased from the estate of Eleanor Ross Lynch and moved in his horses in 1999, turned out beautifully bred runners for decades.

Six years ago, homebred Whirlin Curlin upset the Maryland Juvenile Futurity and secured the inaugural Renaissance Award as Maryland-bred champion 2-year-old male of 2017.

The 2023 Maryland Juvenile winner, Circle P, added to the list of Marathon stakes performers.

The gelded son of Speightster sold twice at auction: first to Andrew Motion for $18,000 at the 2021 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic December mixed sale as part of the Marshall Silverman consignment, then for $47,000 to Taproot Bloodstock at the 2022 Keeneland September yearling sale.

Based at Penn National for owner DeSales 85 and trainer Flint Stites, Circle P made his stakes debut in the Maryland Juvenile. Sent off at 9-1, he broke well then drifted toward the back of the eight-horse field. Speedyness and Catahoula Moon, winner of the Maryland Million Nursery, battled through opening fractions of :22.95 and :45.66. The duo led by 5 lengths as they turned for home, but Circle P gathered momentum.

In the stretch, Catahoula Moon dispatched Speedyness, but had no response for Circle P's rally. Circle P struck the front in the last sixteenth and pulled clear to win by 1¾ lengths after 7 furlongs in 1:24.49. Catahoula Moon held for second, while Speedyness finished third.

Circle P pushed his record to 2-1-1, with earnings of $101,990.

Circle P is the sixth foal out of Quiet Inferno, a daughter of Quiet American purchased for $35,000 by Marathon at the 2019 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky February mixed sale in foal to Kantharos. All five foals to race are winners, including six-figure earners Sir Rick (Paynter), winner of the 2020 Mine That Bird Derby at Sunland Park, and Maryland-bred Kantharos filly Mercury Head, a two-time winner in 2023. Quiet Inferno's most recent reported foal is a 2022 filly by Paynter, bred by Marathon and born May 3.

Angelos, a longtime racing fan and majority owner of the Baltimore Orioles, told the *Baltimore Sun* in 1994, "I feel there are three key institutions in this state. There's the Orioles, the Baltimore Symphony, and the state's Thoroughbred racing and breeding industry." Marathon Farm's contribution is coming to a close as Angelos, 94, is suffering from advanced-stage dementia. ❧

Intrepid Daydream

Politely Stakes
$75,000-guaranteed, 6 fur., registered Maryland-bred or sired fillies and mares, 3 & up.
Laurel Park, Nov. 24.

Dk.b./br.f., 2019, Jess's Dream—Intrepid Tour, by Jump Start. Bred and owned by Paul Fowler Jr.; trained by Gary Capuano. Foaled at Christmas Farm, Upper Marlboro, Md.

				Lifetime
starts	*1st*	*2nd*	*3rd*	*earnings*
13	7 (3)	3	1 (1)	$363,350 (through Nov. 24)

2023: 1st $100,000 **Shine Again S**, 6 fur., fillies and mares, 3 & up, non-winners of a sweepstakes, Pimlico, Sept. 16; $100,000 **Maryland Million Distaff S**, 7 fur., fillies and mares, 3 & up, registered Md.-bred or sired by eligible Md. stallions, Laurel, Oct. 14; $75,000 **Politely S**, 6 fur., registered Md.-bred or sired fillies and mares, 3 & up, Laurel, Nov. 24; 3rd **Caesar's Wish S**.

Intrepid Daydream made it four consecutive trips to the winner's circle since mid-September for owner/breeder Larry Fowler and trainer Gary Capuano, three in stakes company, after romping home by 5¼ lengths as the 1-5 favorite in the 6-furlong Politely

Stakes for Maryland-bred or sired fillies and mares, at Laurel Park Nov. 24.

Making her first start since a 3-length win in the 7-furlong Maryland Million Distaff in mid-October, she broke alertly under Jevian Toledo and rated off Response Time through a first quarter in :22.70.

They raced side-by-side around the turn and into the stretch before Intrepid Daydream put her head in front and built a 3-length lead by the eighth pole. Toledo wrapped up late and hand-rode her to the wire, stopping the clock in 1:10.85. Response Time held for second, replicating the exacta of the Maryland Million Distaff, while Utterly Enchanting rallied for third in the field of six.

Fowler and Capuano had high hopes for the daughter of Jess's Dream from the start, when she made her debut at 2 in the Small Wonder Stakes at Delaware Park. Although off the board, it was a valuable learning experience and she broke her maiden next out by nearly 17 lengths. Every one of her seven wins have been by daylight, and also include the Shine Again at Pimlico and Tax Free Shopping Distaff allowance at Delaware Park in September, both at 6 furlongs.

The Politely improved her 4-year-old season to 4-2-1 in seven starts, for earnings of $247,850, and increased her lifetime totals to 7-3-1 in 13 starts, and $363,350 earned.

Three weeks after the Politely, Fowler sold Intrepid Daydream to Miller Racing, who moved her to the barn of Saffie Joseph Jr.

Though Fowler planned to keep Intrepid Daydream as a broodmare, the offer proved irresistible. "I just couldn't turn it down, as much as I

wanted to. Sometimes, you gotta make some choices."

Fowler plans on cheering on Intrepid Daydream from afar, in the hopes that any additional wins will boost the stock of her dam and siblings. "If they can get some graded stakes, I'd be looking pretty good with my broodmare and everything," said Fowler. "That was part of the thinking [to sell] as well."

Intrepid Daydream is out of the unraced Jump Start mare Intrepid Tour, also bred by Fowler. From four reported foals of racing age, Intrepid Tour has produced three six-figure winners from as many starters. Her daughter Intrepid Dream, a year-older full-sister to Intrepid Daydream, has won four of five starts for earnings of $120,395 and returned to the track to prepare for her first start since November 2022. The mare's first foal, Starting Tour (Buffum), is a six-time winner of $101,588. Three-year-old colt Intrepid's Legacy (Imagining), is unraced. She produced a Jess's Dream filly last March and was bred to Blofeld for 2024.

"I miss her already," Fowler said a few days after Intrepid Daydream's sale. "When she got on the van [to Florida], it was killing me, but sometimes there's things you've got to do, and you just can't turn some things down." ❧

Jim McCue (2)

Kissedbyanangel

Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship Stakes
$100,000-guaranteed, 7 fur., registered Maryland-bred or sired 2-year-old fillies. Laurel Park, Dec. 2.

Dk.b./br.f., 2021, Golden Lad—Angelinthemorning, by Street Sense. Bred by Super C Racing; owned and trained by Joanne Shankle. Foaled at Northview Stallion Station, Chesapeake City, Md.

Lifetime

starts	*1st*	*2nd*	*3rd*	*earnings*
6	3 (1)	1	1 (1)	$136,930 (through Dec. 2)

2023: 1st $100,000 **Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship S**, 7 fur., registered Md.-bred or sired 2-year-old fillies, Laurel, Dec. 2; 3rd **Maryland Million Lassie S**.

Kissedbyanangel continued her ascent as the division leader when taking the $100,000 Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship Dec. 2 by 2 lengths for her second consecutive victory.

Owned and trained by Joanne Shankle, the daughter of Northview Stallion Station's Golden Lad was searching for her first stakes win, but went off as the 3-2 favorite among eight 2-year-old fillies on the strength of a daylight victory in a first-level optional claimer at Laurel, when risked for a $62,500 tag Nov. 17. Her prior start was a third in the Maryland Million Lassie.

Breaking well under Angel Cruz, she set every fraction and came home in 1:24.94 for 7 furlongs. Sheilahs Warcloud, runner-up in the Maryland Million Lassie, chased her home to finish second.

Kissedbyanangel improved to 3-1-1 from six starts, for earnings of $136,930. She made her debut for breeder Super C Racing in a $12,500 maiden claimer at Pimlico Sept. 10, which she won by 6¾ lengths and was taken by Shankle. An off-the-board finish in the Selima Stakes on the turf came next. Since returning to the main track, she has two wins, a second and a third in four starts.

Kissedbyanangel is out of the winning Street Sense mare Angelinthemorning, purchased at 3 (as a maiden in her only start) for $8,000 at the 2018 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky February mixed sale by Chris Melton for Super C. Campaigned by Super C with trainers Anthony Farrior and Claudio Gonzalez, Angelinthemorning raced 12 times that year, winning four.

Bred the next spring to Golden Lad, she produced Fartlek, a two-time winner last year at 3.

Angelinthemorning has a 2-year-old filly named Buckin' Right (Friesan Fire) and a yearling colt by Long River born last April. Bred to Engage, she did not get in foal. Sent through the recent Fasig-Tipton Midlantic December sale, she went back home with Michael Coombs, of Super C Racing, for $30,000. "She was not in foal, but we wanted to cut back on our horse numbers and decided to test the market," said Coombs, who added Angelinthemorning will be sent to Kentucky to be bred in 2024, with a mating decision yet to be decided. ❧

Seven's Eleven

Howard and Sondra Bender Memorial Stakes
$75,000-guaranteed, 7 fur., registered Maryland-bred or sired, 3 & up. Laurel Park, Nov. 24.

Gr./ro.g., 2020, Bandbox—Senorita Siete, by Senor Swinger. Bred and owned by Cottonwood Stable LLC; trained by Carlos A. Mancilla. Foaled at Cottonwood Stable LLC, Parkton, Md.

Lifetime

starts	*1st*	*2nd*	*3rd*	*earnings*
12	5 (2)	1	1	$222,230 (through Nov. 24)

2023: 1st $100,000 **Maryland Million Sprint S**, 6 fur., 3 & up, sired by eligible Md. stallions, Laurel, Oct. 14; $75,000 **Howard and Sondra Bender Memorial S**, 7 fur., registered Md.-bred or sired, 3 & up, Laurel, Nov. 24.

Maryland Million Sprint hero Seven's Eleven validated his form and added another stakes win when he dominated the Howard and Sondra Bender Memorial for Maryland-bred or -sired sprinters at Laurel Park Nov. 24.

The gelded son of the late Northview stallion Bandbox recorded the fifth win of his sophomore campaign as the slight 2-1 favorite in the field of nine mostly older runners, including Maryland-bred champion Joe, recent Polynesian Stakes winner Double Crown and New York shipper Sagamore Mischief.

With Angel Cruz up, Seven's Eleven took the lead early and set every fraction. He opened up in the stretch and held off Double Crown by 2¾ lengths while 2023 Star de Naskra winner Super Accelerate rallied for third. Seven's Eleven covered 7 furlongs in 1:23.34.

A homebred for Cottonwood Stable, Seven's Eleven won the Maryland Million Sprint by 5 lengths for his first stakes victory. Lifetime, his record improved to 5-1-1 in 12 starts for earnings of $222,230.

Seven's Eleven is the second winner from as many foals for the winning Senor Swinger mare Senorita Siete. Senorita Siete has a 2-year-old filly by Street Magician named Seven's Magic and produced a Good Samaritan colt Seven's Good last spring before being bred back to Blofeld. The family traces back to the *Gallant Man mare Gracefully (his fourth dam), whose 12 winners from 15 foals included Eclipse Award champion sprinter Guilty Conscience. ❧

What's happening at the library

On the calendar at the Maryland Horse Library and Education Center in Reisterstown this winter:

Monday, Jan. 22, 4 p.m. "A Horse Racing Author's Journey" with John Eisenberg.

Baltimore author and sportswriter John Eisenberg has written five books on horse racing, from *The Longest Shot: Lil E. Tee and the Kentucky Derby* to *Hallowed Ground: A History of Gainesway Farm*, with *Native Dancer*, *The Great Match Race: When North Met South in America's First Sports Spectacle*, and *My Guy Barbaro*, with Edgar Prado, in between. Eisenberg will talk about his experience and share tales about each.

Monday, Feb. 26, 4 p.m. Documentary film *The Legacy of Black Horsemen*.

The library celebrates Black History Month with a showing of *The Legacy of Black Horsemen*. Produced by PBS affiliate KET in Lexington, Ky., this hour-long documentary tells the stories of the Black horsemen who shaped the sport through its embryonic period in the 19th century. The documentary uses interviews with historians, paintings, and more to capture the impact of Black horsemen on racing

Visit marylandhorse.com for more information on these and other events.

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Maryland Fund Report

Bonuses paid for races run
in September 2023 at Maryland tracks

Ben's Cat Stakes

September 16. Purse $75,000-guaranteed. For 3-year-olds and up, registered Maryland-bred or Maryland sired. 5 fur., turf. 10 competed. (Closed with 20 nominations.) Winner: Pennsylvania-bred by Great Notion. Second: SKY'S NOT FALLING, by Seville (Ger). Breeder bonus: R. Larry Johnson ($3,375). Stallion bonus: Seville Syndicate ($1,125). Third: MATTA, by Take Charge Indy. Breeder bonus: Fitzhugh LLC ($1,687.50). Stallion bonus: None.

Breeder bonuses

Includes the additional 10 percent Maryland-sired bonus for winners of maiden races, initiated Jan. 1 during the 2022 Laurel winter meet. That bonus is reflected in the second figure earned for the race.

Anchor and Hope Farm Inc.—Al Loves Josie: Sept. 10, 5th race, $3,375. Full Proof: Sept. 29, 6th race, $5,940/$1,980. I Have Courage: Sept. 1, 7th race, $2,227.50. Winked: Sept. 16, 4th race, $1,215. ($14,737.50)

Barak Farm—Enemynumbernine: Sept. 10, 3rd race, $2,340. Fivecommatwo: Sept. 1, 2nd race, $1,125. Lady Mosler: Sept. 17, 2nd race, $607.50. One Ten: Sept. 3, 8th race, $1,440; Sept. 24, 6th race, $1,800. Some Is Nine: Sept. 15, 3rd race, $2,295. Water Witch: Sept. 1, 5th race, $742.50; Sept. 30, 2nd race, $630. ($10,980)

Barak Farm and Sharon Dodgen- Backnthewoods: Sept. 9, 8th race, $2,790.

William Bayne and Super C Racing—Burningupthedough: Sept. 2, 6th race, $708.75. Champagne Dance: Sept. 3, 9th race, $708.75. ($1,417.50)

BB Horses—Royal Seamstress: Sept. 30, 1st race, $2,340.

Joseph Besecker—All the Way: Sept. 29, 2nd race, $1,620.

Charles Blanford- Go Sherry Go: Sept. 10, 3rd race, $1,170; Sept. 22, 7th race, $990. Momma's Lino: Sept. 22, 7th race, $5,940. ($8,100)

Bonita Farm—Calypso Ghost: Sept. 17, 5th race, $405.

Bonita Farm and partners—Sigmund: Sept. 17, 4th race, $607.50.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman—Chelichna: Sept. 22, 8th race, $7,290. Cynergy's Electra: Sept. 15, 9th race, $1,935. Lilly Lightning: Sept. 1, 4th race, $6,210. $2,070. ($17,505)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and Dr. Brooke Bowman—Bandonarun: Sept. 8, 8th race, $5,940. What Does It Take: Sept. 10, 4th race, $6,480. Whatsyourbigidea: Sept. 29, 4th race, $5,940/$1,980. ($20,340)

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman, Dr. Brooke Bowman and Milton P. Higgins III—Post Time: Sept. 22, 9th race, $7,830.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman, Quin Bowman and Rebecca Davis—Clubman: Sept. 2, 2nd race, $2,970.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman and Rebecca Davis—Double Crown: Sept. 10, 9th race, $13,500. Shady Munni: Sept. 30, 3rd race, $1,800. ($15,300)

Deborah A. Butts—Gilda's Girl: Sept. 16, 11th race, $3,915.

Dennis A. Cardoza—Captain Cardo: Sept. 22, 5th race, $765.

Wes Carter—Meno: Sept. 9, 9th race, $990.

Chanceland Farm—Ride the Rapids: Sept. 9, 4th race, $517.50.

Classic Thoroughbred XXV—Moonset: Sept. 2, 1st race, $708.75.

Clover Hill Racing LLC—Ladneedsahandler: Sept. 2, 7th race, $2,340.

Angela B. Coombs—Catahoula Moon: Sept. 4, 1st race, $6,210/$2,070; Sept. 24, 9th race, $2,430. ($10,710)

Cordelia Stables LLC—Victorian Riviera: Sept. 1, 5th race, $371.25.

Cottonwood Stable LLC—Seven's Eleven: Sept. 29, 5th race, $6,480.

Country Life Farm and Moonlit Malibu LLC—Esperannna: Sept. 17, 5th race, $2,430.

Country Life Farm and Real Good Time LLC—Bill of Rights: Sept. 3, 7th race, $776.25; Sept. 17, 7th race, $787.50. ($1,563.75)

Country Life Farm and Rock Sapphire LLC—Sapphire Beauty: Sept. 2, 3rd race, $4,657.50.

Dark Hollow Farm—Betcha by Golly: Sept. 4, 6th race, $1,125. Circle Home: Sept. 22, 8th race, $1,215. Edie Meeny Miny Mo: Sept. 29, 9th race, $1,395. Pudd'n N Pie: Sept. 22, 7th race, $1,980. ($5,715)

David M. DiPietro—Little Josie Wales: Sept. 9, 6th race, $1,080; Sept. 30, 5th race, $1,080. ($2,160)

Double NK Partnership and Dennis Jankiewicz—Disputed Notion: Sept. 8, 1st race, $1,035; Sept. 29, 3rd race, $1,035. ($2,070)

Hassan Elamri—Golden Can: Sept. 4, 7th race, $1,170.

Elevate Equine LLC, DDRS and Ron Cuneo—Patriotic Party: Sept. 2, 2nd race, $495.

Annette Eubanks—Lookin for Justice: Sept. 2, 2nd race, $990.

Charles D. and Dianne E. Fawley—Thunderhouse: Sept. 1, 3rd race, $472.50.

Fitzhugh LLC—Matta: Sept. 16, 6th race, $1,687.50.

Paul L. Fowler Jr.—Intrepid Daydream: Sept. 16, 5th race, $10,125.

Charles L. Frock—Great Sisters: Sept. 3, 4th race, $337.50.

Gainesway Thoroughbreds Limited—Dancinonthebeach: Sept. 24, 10th race, $4,860/$1,620. ($6,480)

Glenangus Farm LLC—Deeds of Love: Sept. 9, 7th race, $2,160. Grand Manner: Sept. 2, 4th race, $742.50. Proper Storm: Sept. 17, 2nd race, $3,645. Riccio: Sept. 10, 4th race, $1,080. ($7,627.50)

Grandview Stable Inc. and Dominick J. Juno—Dolice Vita: Sept. 30, 3rd race, $900.

Maria M. Haire—Neolithica: Sept. 24, 3rd race, $1,620. Play Harder: Sept. 29, 2nd race, $4,860. ($6,480)

David P. Hill—Bessie Blue: Sept. 30, 4th race, $4,860/$1,620. ($6,480)

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Register your Maryland stallion for the 2024 MARYLAND-BRED RACE FUND PROGRAM

DON'T MISS A BONUS!

If your stallion has offspring of racing age, make sure you register him for the Maryland Fund program! STALLIONS MUST BE REGISTERED EVERY YEAR to be eligible to receive stallion bonuses. Registration fee is $250.

Call the MHBA office at (410) 252-2100 x129 or visit www.marylandthoroughbred.com.

Holly House Farm—Summer Odds: Sept. 9, 7th race, $1,080.

Jagger Inc.—Little Lance: Sept. 17, 3rd race, $3,375/$1,125. Stevethevandriver: Sept. 3, 1st race, $2,227.50. ($6,727.50)

R. Larry Johnson—By Its Absence: Sept. 17, 7th race, $1,575. Chasing Artemis: Sept. 1, 7th race, $371.25. Coringa: Sept. 29, 6th race, $1,980. Energy Efficient: Sept. 30, 11th race, $5,940. Future Is Now: Sept. 16, 4th race, $7,290. Quit Quay: Sept. 29, 4th race, $990. Sky's Not Falling: Sept. 16, 6th race, $3,375. Whenigettoheaven: Sept. 24, 8th race, $1,305. ($22,826.25)

Hope Haskell Jones—Shine On Moon: Sept. 16, 2nd race, $7,020/$2,340. ($9,360)

Harry Kassap LLC—Opinionated: Sept. 16, 11th race, $1,305.

Timothy L. Keefe—Watch Me Disappear: Sept. 2, 9th race, $742.50.

Kelly Racing LLC—Magic in the Park: Sept. 22, 4th race, $2,340.

Dr. Megan Kerford DVM and Justin J. Nixon—Sheilahs Warcloud: Sept. 16, 3rd race, $2,430.

Joanne P. Krishack—Commanding General: Sept. 24, 8th race, $2,610.

Lady Olivia at North Cliff LLC—Martharita: Sept. 1, 7th race, $742.50. Never Grew Up: Sept. 4, 1st race, $2,070. ($2,812.50)

Lewis Family Racing Stable—Hunter Joe: Sept. 24, 6th race, $900.

Estate of Fred T. Lewis Sr. DVM—Landon Jack: Sept. 3, 7th race, $1,552.50.

Little Man Farm—Beltane: Sept. 16, 2nd race, $2,340. Tidewater: Sept. 8, 6th race, $6,480. ($8,820)

Cal Lynch, Dr. Tom Keenan and Spendthrift Farm—Under the Overpass: Sept. 29, 6th race, $990.

Estate of Robert T. Manfuso—Imaginetheodds: Sept. 30, 4th race, $810.

Marathon Farm Inc.—Cloudy Night: Sept. 3, 9th race, $1,417.50.

Daniel E. Marconi—Bella Bettina: Sept. 30, 5th race, $6,480.

Helen C. Marshall—Take Charge Too: Sept. 8, 7th race, $6,480.

Maryland Mare Venture LLC—Ellie Victorina: Sept. 9, 4th race, $1,035.

Charles C.D. McGill—Disputed Claim: Sept. 10, 7th race, $3,645.

Bryan B. Minnich—King's River: Sept. 29, 10th race, $3,915/$1,305. ($5,220)

Kevin P. Morgan—Mavilus: Sept. 4, 8th race, $2,700.

Morgan's Ford Farm—Nicolar: Sept. 17, 8th race, $1,170. Treasure Tradition: Sept. 3, 8th race, $720. ($1,890)

Murmur Farm—Bondiva: Sept. 29, 4th race, $1,980. Golden Charm: Sept. 24, 10th race, $1,620. ($3,600)

Audrey R. Murray—Pounding Music: Sept. 30, 2nd race, $3,780.

No Guts No Glory Farm—Bandits Heart: Sept. 3, 7th race, $4,657.50. Bandits Warrior: Sept. 4, 7th race, $2,340. Bigdaddysboy: Sept. 1, 1st race, $2,700/$900. Cocktail Dreaming: Sept. 17, 5th race, $810. Dream River: Sept. 1, 1st race, $450. ($11,857.50)

Clarke Ohrstrom—Jardani: Sept. 10, 4th race, $2,160. Master Oogway: Sept. 22, 10th race, $652.50. Poggibonsi: Sept. 9, 6th race, $6,480. ($9,292.50)

David W. Palmer—Designer: Sept. 10, 1st race, $2,340.

Joel Politi—Thunder Boss: Sept. 15, 2nd race, $607.50.

A. John Price—Wesley Thomas: Sept. 2, 6th race, $1,417.50.

Charles J. Reed—Johnyz From Albany: Sept. 2, 7th race, $1,170; Sept. 24, 8th race, $7,830. ($9,000)

Cynthia K. Rickman—Crownedcountcristo: Sept. 22, 5th race, $382.50.

Randy Ridgely and Gary Ridgely—Fun Notion: Sept. 8, 6th race, $2,160. Mon Gateau: Sept. 2, 6th race, $4,252.50. ($6,412.50)

Tim Ritchey and Janet Ritchey—Dancer's Melody: Sept. 4, 6th race, $3,375.

Rolling Meadows Farm—Brooklyn Girl: Sept. 15, 9th race, $5,805. Irish Angel: Sept. 24, 3rd race, $810. Pride of Payton: Sept. 16, 1st race, $3,645. ($10,260)

Timothy J. Rooney—Money's Worth: Sept. 9, 6th race, $2,160. Pietrelcina: Sept. 17, 10th race, $1,215. ($3,375)

Marcus A. Scott—Bashdaflash: Sept. 1, 6th race, $472.50.

Hamilton A. Smith—I'm Gittin There: Sept. 29, 9th race, $2,790.

Franklin G. Smith Sr.—Looking for Water: Sept. 4, 4th race, $776.25.

Bob G. Sowder—Irish Lace: Sept. 15, 3rd race, $382.50.

Matt Spencer and Kelly Cox—Not as Lucky as Us: Sept. 9, 1st race, $3,375/$1,125. ($4,500)

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Spingler and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Mongold—C Two: Sept. 2, 9th race, $371.25.

James B. Steele Jr.—Mashua: Sept. 17, 6th race, $3,915/$1,305. ($5,220)

Super C Racing Inc.—Kissedbyanangel: Sept. 10, 10th race, $3,375/$1,125. ($4,500)

Sweet Spirits Stables LLC—Fille d'Esprit: Sept. 29, 9th race, $8,370. Sweet Syntax: Sept. 1, 6th race, $2,835/$945. ($12,150)

Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC—Dulce Kiara: Sept. 9, 7th race, $6,480. Feeling Woozy: Sept. 29, 5th race, $1,080. Goodafternoonoscar: Sept. 8, 7th race, $1,080. Northern Glow: Sept. 30, 5th race, $2,160. ($10,800)

Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC and Ellen Charles—Closertotheheart: Sept. 1, 2nd race, $562.50.

James F. Thames—Irish Warlock: Sept. 10, 7th race, $607.50; Sept. 29, 3rd race, $517.50. Notion to Tapit: Sept. 4, 2nd race, $742.50. Run Rocky Run: Sept. 1, 3rd race, $945. ($2,812.50)

The Elkstone Group LLC—It's Viper: Sept. 24, 4th race, $1,305. Order Ofthe Kettle: Sept. 8, 7th race, $2,160; Sept. 29, 5th race, $2,160. Senator Kelly: Sept. 22, 3rd race, $652.50. Vax a Nation: Sept. 24, 2nd race, $4,725. ($11,002.50)

Thornmar Farm LLC—Great Call: Sept. 9, 1st race, $562.50. Just the Thing: Sept. 1, 4th race, $1,035. Tall Order: Sept. 8, 6th race, $1,080. Watch Out World: Sept. 4, 9th race, $1,800. ($4,477.50)

Thornmar Farm and Tim Keefe—Too Many Kisses: Sept. 30, 1st race, $7,020.

2500 Determined Stud Holdings—Determined Driver: Sept. 2, 8th race, $4,500.

Two Legends Farm—Devil Pays in Gold: Sept. 15, 2nd race, $1,215. Hazelmoor Beach: Sept. 17, 2nd race, $1,215. ($2,430)

Walter N. Vieser II—All Threes: Sept. 15, 8th race, $1,395. Blameitonthefun: Sept. 3, 5th race, $742.50. Intel Agent: Sept. 17, 6th race, $1,305. ($3,442.50)

Katharine Merryman Voss—Viennese Waltz: Sept. 29, 8th race, $1,170.

Warning Drums Racing LLC—Good Knight Nile: Sept. 17, 4th race, $3,645.

David W. Wright—Step Ahead: Sept. 9, 1st race, $1,125.

Karen Zeiler—We Got Lucky: Sept. 10, 6th race, $652.50.

ZWP Stable and Non Stop Stable—Malibu Beauty: Sept. 30, 9th race, $2,250.

Stallion bonuses

BALTIMORE BOB (Bessie Blue: Sept. 30, 4th race, $1,620): Robert Gerczak.

BANDBOX (Dulce Kiara: Sept. 9, 7th race, $2,160. Seven's Eleven: Sept. 29, 5th race, $2,160): Northview Stallion Station—$4,320.

BLOFELD (Bondiva: Sept. 29, 4th race, $660. Brooklyn Girl: Sept. 15, 9th race, $1,935. Golden Charm: Sept. 24, 10th race, $540. Johnyz From Albany: Sept. 2, 7th race, $390; Sept. 24, 8th race, $2,610. Pride of Payton: Sept. 16, 1st race, $1,215): Blofeld Syndicate—$7,350.

Maryland-bred top earners in 2023

(through December 1)

1.	Intrepid Daydream	$247,850	
2.	Response Time	242,260	
3.	Liquidator	229,410	
4.	Berks	210,190	
5.	Seven's Eleven	209,210	
6.	Award Wanted	202,500	
7.	Double Crown	201,620	
8.	Al Loves Josie	192,343	
9.	Poggibonsi	184,340	
10.	Eastern Bay	174,855	
11.	Holy Synchronicity	$168,060	
12.	Easy Action	166,760	
13.	Fille d'Esprit	155,810	
14.	Kissed by Fire	154,600	
15.	It's Viper	152,610	
16.	I'm Gittin There	149,430	
17.	Princess Kokachin	147,660	
18.	Wet My Beak	147,600	
19.	Super Accelerate	144,540	
20.	Willful Desire	143,200	

BOURBON COURAGE (Cocktail Dreaming: Sept. 17, 5th race, $270. Double Crown: Sept. 10, 9th race, $4,500. Full Proof: Sept. 29, 6th race, $1,980. I Have Courage: Sept. 1, 7th race, $742.50. Martharita: Sept. 1, 7th race, $247.50. Never Grew Up: Sept. 4, 1st race, $690. Proper Storm: Sept. 17, 2nd race, $1,215. Senator Kelly: Sept. 22, 3rd race, $217.50. Shine On Moon: Sept. 16, 2nd race, $2,340): Bourbon Courage Syndicate—$12,202.50.

BUFFUM (Commanding General: Sept. 24, 8th race, $870. Malibu Beauty: Sept. 30, 9th race, $750): Buffum Syndicate—$1,620.

DESPITE THE ODDS (Summer Odds: Sept. 9, 7th race, $360): R. Larry Johnson.

DIVINING Rod (Champagne Dance: Sept. 3, 9th race, $236.25. Dancinonthebeach: Sept. 24, 10th race, $1,620. Looking for Water: Sept. 4, 4th race, $258.75. Water Witch: Sept. 1, 5th race, $247.50; Sept. 30, 2nd race, $210): Divining Rod Syndicate—$2,572.50.

DORTMUND (Dolice Vita: Sept. 30, 3rd race, $300. Sigmund: Sept. 17, 4th race, $202.50. Victorian Riviera: Sept. 1, 5th race, $123.75): Kaleem S. Shah—$626.25.

EDITORIAL (Opinionated: Sept. 16, 11th race, $435. Sweet Syntax: Sept. 1, 6th race, $945): Climax Stallions LLC—$1,380.

ETCHED (Calypso Ghost: Sept. 17, 5th race, $135): Bonita Farm Stallion Partnership.

FRIESAN FIRE (Burningupthedough: Sept. 2, 6th race, $236.25. Landon Jack: Sept. 3, 7th race, $517.50. Shady Munni: Sept. 30, 3rd race, $600): Friesan Fire Syndicate—$1,353.75.

GOLDEN LAD (C Two: Sept. 2, 9th race, $123.75. Catahoula Moon: Sept. 4, 1st race, $2,070; Sept. 24, 9th race, $810. Crownedcountcristo: Sept. 22, 5th race, $127.50. Disputed Claim: Sept. 10, 7th race, $1,215. Go Sherry Go: Sept. 10, 3rd race, $390; Sept. 22, 7th race, $330. Golden Can: Sept. 4, 7th race, $390. I'm Gittin There: Sept. 29, 9th race, $930. Just the Thing: Sept. 1, 4th race, $345. Kissedbyanangel: Sept. 10, 10th race, $1,125. Ladneedsahandler: Sept. 2, 7th race, $780. Quit Quay: Sept. 29, 4th race, $330. Wesley Thomas: Sept. 2, 6th race, $472.50): Golden Lad Syndicate—$9,438.75.

GREAT NOTION (All Threes: Sept. 15, 8th race, $465. Closertotheheart: Sept. 1, 2nd race, $187.50. Disputed Notion: Sept. 8, 1st race, $345; Sept. 29, 3rd race, $345. Fille d'Esprit: Sept. 29, 9th race, $2,790. Fun Notion: Sept. 8, 6th race, $720. Future Is Now: Sept. 16, 4th race, $2,430. Great Call: Sept. 9, 1st race, $187.50. Intel Agent: Sept. 17, 6th race, $435. Little Josie Wales: Sept. 9, 6th race, $360; Sept. 30, 5th race, $360. Mashua: Sept. 17, 6th race, $1,305. Notion to Tapit: Sept. 4, 2nd race, $247.50. Stevethevandriver: Sept. 3, 1st race, $742.50. Treasure Tradition: Sept. 3, 8th race, $240. Watch Me Disappear: Sept. 2, 9th race, $247.50. Whatsyourbigidea: Sept. 29, 4th race, $1,980): Great Notion Syndicate—$13,387.50.

HANGOVER KID (Pounding Music: Sept. 30, 2nd race, $1,260): Hangover Kid Syndicate.

HOLY BOSS (Al Loves Josie: Sept. 10, 5th race, $1,125. Jardani: Sept. 10, 4th race, $720. Poggibonsi: Sept. 9, 6th race, $2,160. Thunder Boss: Sept. 15, 2nd race, $202.50): Holy Boss Syndicate—$4,207.50.

IMAGINING (Bigdaddysboy: Sept. 1, 1st race, $900. Hazelmoor Beach: Sept. 17, 2nd race, $405. Imaginetheodds: Sept. 30, 4th race, $270. Little Lance: Sept. 17, 3rd race, $1,125. Winked: Sept. 16, 4th race, $405): Imagining Syndicate—$3,105.

IRISH WAR CRY (Feeling Woozy: Sept. 29, 5th race, $360. Fivecommatwo: Sept. 1, 2nd race, $375. Irish Lace: Sept. 15, 3rd race, $127.50. Irish Warlock: Sept. 10, 7th race, $202.50; Sept. 29, 3rd race, $172.50. King's River: Sept. 29, 10th race, $1,305. Royal Seamstress: Sept. 30, 1st race, $780. Run Rocky Run: Sept. 1, 3rd race, $315): Northview Stallion Station Inc.—$3,637.50.

LONG RIVER (Dream River: Sept. 1, 1st race, $150. Ride the Rapids: Sept. 9, 4th race, $172.50. Step Ahead: Sept. 9, 1st race, $375): Long River Syndicate—$697.50.

MADEFROMLUCKY (Cynergy's Electra: Sept. 15, 9th race, $645. Lilly Lightning: Sept. 1, 4th race, $2,070. Not as Lucky as Us: Sept. 9, 1st race, $1,125. Sheilahs Warcloud: Sept. 16, 3rd race, $810. We Got Lucky: Sept. 10, 6th race, $217.50): Madefromlucky Syndicate—$4,867.50.

MOSLER (Bandits Heart: Sept. 3, 7th race, $1,552.50. Bandits Warrior: Sept. 4, 7th race, $780. Esperannna: Sept. 17, 5th race, $810. Lady Mosler: Sept. 17, 2nd race, $202.50. Meno: Sept. 9, 9th race, $330. Sapphire Beauty: Sept. 2, 3rd race, $1,552.50): Mosler Syndicate—$5,227.50.

NO NEVER NO MORE (Irish Angel: Sept. 24, 3rd race, $270): Tigertail Ranch.

NOT FOR LOVE (Clubman: Sept. 2, 2nd race, $990): Not For Love Syndicate.

ORIENTATE (Mavilus: Sept. 4, 8th race, $900): Orientate Syndicate.

OUTFLANKER (Beltane: Sept. 16, 2nd race, $780. Tidewater: Sept. 8, 6th race, $2,160): Outflanker Syndicate—$2,940.

REDEEMED (Patriotic Party: Sept. 2, 2nd race, $165): Redeemed Syndicate.

SEVILLE (GER) (Chelichna: Sept. 22, 8th race, $2,430. Sky's Not Falling: Sept. 16, 6th race, $1,125): Seville Syndicate—$3,555.

STREET MAGICIAN (Magic in the Park: Sept. 22, 4th race, $780. Whenigettoheaven: Sept. 24, 8th race, $435): R. Larry Johnson—$1,215.

SUPER NINETY NINE (Enemynumbernine: Sept. 10, 3rd race, $780. Some Is Nine: Sept. 15, 3rd race, $765): Country Life Farm—$1,545.

THE THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY NEWSLETTER

Post Time

- News, views and insights that matter to breeders, owners and racing industry professionals - **January 2024** -

In This Issue

Stallion Season Auction set for January 30

2024 Thoroughbred racing dates conditionally approved

Equine Equipment is the best value for your hard earned money

2023 Top 20 New Jersey Breeders

TBANJ Membership Application

Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey

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Rory Huston

Vice President
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Stallion Season Auction set for January 30

The Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey (TBANJ) will conduct its annual Stallion Season Auction beginning Tuesday, Jan. 30 and ending Thursday, Feb. 1.

The online auction is being hosted on the Wanamaker's bidding platform at www.wanamakers.com. All participants must be registered with Wanamaker's prior to bidding. Each season's conditions will be posted as part of their auction page on Wanamaker's.

All proceeds from the auction go to the TBANJ, which uses the funds for promoting the Thoroughbred breeding industry in New Jersey. Stallion seasons will be added until the auction begins on Jan. 30 and a complete list of available seasons will be listed on www.njbreds.com.

Please contact the TBANJ office at 732-542-8880 for additional information.

2024 Thoroughbred racing dates conditionally approved

The New Jersey Racing Commission on Nov. 15 conditionally approved a 71-day racing schedule at Monmouth Park (May 11 to Sept. 15) and 20 dates at the Meadowlands (Oct. 4 to Dec. 7) for 2024.

The dates are conditional because the Meadowlands requested Standardbred racing dates on the same nights on Oct. 25 and 26, Nov. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30 and Dec. 6 and 7.

Additional information about the 2024 racing dates will be posted on the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association of New Jersey's website, www.njbreds.com, when it becomes available.

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2023 Top 20 New Jersey Breeders

The following is a list of the top 20 highest-earning New Jersey breeders during the 2023 racing season of 56 days.

Breeder	Earnings
Holly Crest Farm	$168,045.63
Colonial Farms	105,682.81
Joel R. Weiner Estate	69,825.31
New Farm	57,260.00
Bright View Farm	48,765.63
Isabelle H. De Tomaso	44,727.50
Joseph & Gayle Ioia	43,511.88
Headless Horsemen Racing LLC	41,739.06
Gina Lupton	37,404.06
William Purdey, Jr.	35,978.88
Dianne Boyken	32,937.50
Wes Carter	30,991.25
Bergen Stables	30,273.44
Bright View Farm Inc. & Gregory Kilka	30,000.00
Smith Farm & Stable	30,000.00
John Bowers Jr.	28,750.00
ARM Consulting LLC	27,500.00
Raymond Cornish	26,093.75
Patricia Generazio	25,908.00
Dennis A. Drazin	23,304.69

THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

Membership Application

Member Information

NAME _____ SS#/FEDERAL I.D.# _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ COUNTY _____

TELEPHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Membership Categories

☐ Breeder — A breeder member shall be a person who owns the required interest in a broodmare or registered stallion domiciled in New Jersey; who submits an application for membership, and pays the membership dues. A breeder member shall have voting rights.

☐ Owner — An owner member shall be a person who owns a registered New Jersey- bred; who submits an application for membership, and pays the membership dues. An owner member will not have voting rights.

☐ Associate — An associate member is a person who is interested in owning, breeding, or racing horses in the State of New Jersey or in fostering economic activity through the breeding, ownership and/or racing of horses in the State of New Jersey. An associate member will not have voting rights.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Membership Dues

A check or money order for $100.00 must accompany this form. Spouses are encouraged to join the **TBANJ** under joint membership status. This fee would total $150.00 per couple. Each spouse must fill out a separate form to accompany the payment. Membership will be effective upon receipt and will be in force each calendar year and must be renewed annually.

THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY
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North Carolina

THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

January 2024

President's message

Happy New Year! We made it through another holiday season, hopefully, safe and sound. It's also time to enjoy another Road to the Derby and follow a new Trail to the Triple Crown. This is the year we can start betting on the races and win our fortunes.

Congratulations to Nancy Shuford for Zippin Pippin's victory, and a hardy well done to all those who had horses make it to the track. We all know how hard that is.

Please prepare your award form and send it by Jan. 31. Please notice a change in the award categories. We removed the Partnership Horse category and replaced it with the NC-Bred Horse category. Several members were involved in large partnerships at one time, but that is no longer the case. It only makes sense to celebrate and honor NC-bred horses.

We need to fill one Board member spot. Are there any volunteers? Thank you all for your continued support of the NCTA.

– Rebecca

Race Review

Zippin Pippin, by Runhappy out of Proud Dame, by Proud Accolade, won for breeder Nancy Shuford at Horseshoe Indianapolis Oct. 31. The 3-year-old bay filly ran inside, fought for the lead, and broke clear late to win by 2¾ lengths, running 5½ furlongs in 1:05.96.

Hartful Hope (NC), by Central Banker out of She's Stylish, by Posse, ran second for breeder Art Bauer and owners Gerald Eckhart and G. & D. Eckhart – Jimmer Racing at Mahoning Valley Race Course Nov. 6. The 3-year-old dark bay filly ran six furlongs on a fast dirt track and won her two previous races.

Sag Harbor, by Palace out of Dynamite Dame, by El Prado (Ire) came in second for breeder Nancy Shuford at Mountaineer Nov. 12. The 6-year-old chestnut horse ran 5½ furlongs on a fast dirt track. He just came up short at the wire by a neck.

Raise a Ruckus, by Fiber Sonde out of Hot Creek Risin', by Bring the Heat, finished second for breeders Dr. and Mrs. E.C. Lowry and owner E. Clinton Lowry at Charles Town Nov. 16. The 4-year-old gray/roan gelding overcame a difficult trip on a fast dirt track in this 4½-furlong race.

Trigger Happy, by Gun Runner out of Stayclassysandiego, by Rockport Harbor, ran second for breeder Nancy Shuford at Churchill Downs. The 4-year-old gray/roan gelding ran 7 furlongs on a fast dirt track.

Jersey Perfection, by Mission Impazible out of P J Hooker, by Hook and Ladder, came in third at Delaware Park Oct. 26 for breeder Ken Orchard – Jet M Stables. The 4-year-old dark bay gelding ran 1 1/16 miles on a fast dirt track.

Hitting the Board

October 25 – November 24, 2023

Date	Horse	Track	NCTA Connection	RESULTS
26-Oct	Jersey Perfection	Delaware Park	Bred by Ken Orchard - Jet M Stable	3rd
31-Oct	Zippin Pippin	Horseshoe Indianapolis	Bred by Nancy Shuford	WINNER!
6-Nov	Hartful Hope (NC)	Mahoning Valley	Breeder A. Bauer, owners G. Eckhardt, G&D Eckhardt	2nd
12-Nov	Sag Harbor	Mountaineer	Bred by Nancy Shuford	2nd
16-Nov	Raise a Ruckus	Charles Town	Bred & owned by Clint Lowry	2nd
22-Nov	Trigger Happy	Churchill Downs	Bred by Nancy Shuford	2nd

North Carolina Thoroughbred Association

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Membership includes subscriptions to Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred Magazine

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Involvement in Thoroughbred Industry
(Please check any or all pertaining to you)

☐Breeder ☐Racing ☐ Steeplechase ☐Boarding ☐Foaling
☐Lay-ups ☐Race Training ☐Racing Fan ☐Showing ☐Show Training
☐Hunter/Jumper ☐Eventing ☐Dressage ☐Pleasure ☐Other_____

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: **N.C.T.A.**
MAIL WITH COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: **Rebecca Montaldo, NCTA, P.O. Box 76., Fayetteville NC 28302**

Thank you for your support.

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Rebecca Montaldo,** president; **Jimmy Teal,** treasurer; Directors: **Vince Mathews, Chris Stiller

PENNSYLVANIA HORSE BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

PA Thoroughbred NEWSLETTER

January 2024
pabred.com

PA-BRED REMINDERS

- **Early registration:** Within 365 days of foaling
- **Yearling registration:** Dec. 31 of yearling year
- **Stallion registration:** Feb. 15 of year breeding
- **Broodmare domicile:** Dec. 1 or 14 days after a public sale or entering state if being bred back to PA-sire

VISIT PABRED.COM

- **Racing and breeding news**
- **PA-Bred entries/results**
- **Rules, regulations, forms**

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PA-Breds Prove "It Pays to be a PA-Bred" Even After Racing at Thoroughbred Makeover

By Nikki Sherman

Over the last decade, the Thoroughbred horse racing industry has actively worked to provide new careers for its equine athletes when they are ready for retirement from racing.

The Retired Racehorse Project's Thoroughbred Makeover has become one of the most prestigious competitions in the world, and Pennsylvania-Breds have represented the Keystone State with vigor.

Since 2018, the Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association (PHBA) has sponsored a Special Award for the Top PA-Bred in the competition, with the prize doubling from $2,500 at its onset to the current $5,000. Past winners of the Highest-Scoring PA-Bred Award are B K's Angus (2018), Fairly Obvious (2019), Aiken Prep (2021), Sapphire Surprize (2022), as well as three horses that tied for the win representing the 2020 class: Barwin, Monba Number Five and Poised for Action. As many as 35 PA-Breds have competed in one year, when that number was second only to Kentucky-Breds in 2017.

This year, 13 PA-Breds went up against 320 individual competitors and proved their mettle by competing in nine of the 10 divisions. Two were even crowned Champion, including the 2023 Top PA-Bred, Phlox.

Three-year-old Phlox (Dolphus) was a homebred runner for Dede McGehee, but while the maiden showed little talent on the track, she is now a star for Buck Schott in Polo. Phlox was the runaway Preliminary Leader going into the Finale and the duo continued their dominance during the Polo division showcase, winning by an easy 8 points. For comparison, the point differential between second and fourth was 4 points. Phlox competed in her very first chukker during the Finale.

"She's just so willing to be here and do what we want," Schott told the Retired Racehorse Project. "She's just so peaceful and happy in life and I'm happy for her. I'm going to keep playing this filly; she's going to go into my string."

Also victorious were Balboa's Smile (Buffum) and Kaitlyn Aitken, who pulled off an upset over 17 others in Barrel Racing. The 4-year-old filly went into the Finale in fourth place but blew her

PA-bred Balboa's Smile, left, won the Barrel Racing division for Kaitlyn Aitken. Above, Buck Schott rode PA-bred Phlox to victory in the Polo Division. *Averie Levanti photos.*

competition away with a run of 19.452 seconds to capture the Barrel Racing division. Balboa's Smile was bred by Silvio Luis Martin and won $33,671 with one career win in 18 starts. Aitken and Balboa's Smile also contested Competitive Trail where they finished 28th of 51 entrants.

"She's been so good all season," said Aitken, "She started barrel racing in June and won her first futurity. She worked quite hard all season, kept on placing and ended with a futurity year-end award. We are so lucky to be here, and I can't even believe this is real!"

One more PA-Bred competed in the Finale, which allowed the top five preliminary finishers a chance to showcase their talents. Comfortably Cool (Winchill) and amateur Mike Leverett placed fifth overall of those 51 entries from the Competitive Trail division and they also competed in Ranch Work. As a racehorse, Comfortably Cool won two races from 22 starts for earnings of $45,197. The 7-year-old gelding was bred by Pewter Stable.

Pewter Stable was also represented by 9-year-old Prized Merry (Pure Prize), whose dam is multiple stakes winner Merry Princess. Prized Merry earned $83,917 with five wins in 16 starts and was owned during his entire racing career by Pewter Stable. In the Thoroughbred Makeover while matched with rider Hannah Schofield, he finished 10th of 82 in Dressage and also competed in Eventing.

The best racehorse of the group was stakes winner Dreams Untold (Smarty Jones), whose last race was less than seven months before the Makeover. Ridden by Erica Eggert Rossner, Dreams Untold competed in both Eventing and Show Hunter. He was bred and raced by Patricia Chapman's Someday Farm, winning six of 22 starts, including the 2021 Blitzen Stakes, and earning $281,600.

Owin I Am (Jump Start), bred by Lydee Shea, won 10 of 40 career races, garnering $220,548. In the Thoroughbred Makeover, the 8-year-old gelding emphasized that age and a long racing career should not be a factor in a new discipline. Ridden by Kelly Lasher, the duo finished seventh of 72 entrants in Show Hunter and 25th of 69 in Show Jumping.

Blackstone Farm LLC-bred Secret Cargo (Gun Runner) sold for $300,000 at the 2020 Keeneland September Yearling Sale. Luckily for junior rider Macie Lyons, she was able to pick up Secret Cargo when he finished unplaced in two career starts. They competed in Show Hunter, placing 25th.

Kimberly Wojcik was named Top Amateur in Freestyle aboard Lucky Hero (Partner's Hero) with a seventh-place finish. The gelding was a homebred

Thoroughbred Makeover continued

for Barbara Geraghty and earned $100,752 in 33 starts, with three wins, including a 3½-length score in a 2020 allowance at Parx Racing. Wojcik and Lucky Hero also competed in Dressage.

Similarly, Talented T J (Talent Search) and Midtown (Orientate) were also owned as racehorses by their respective breeders. IBB Thoroughbred's Talented T J had one win at Penn National before finding his way to Alexandra Gilbertson, who rode the 4-year-old gelding in Show Hunter, finishing a solid 12th. Midtown was bred by Tom Coulter's Arrowwood Farm and earned $41,478 with one victory during his 14-start racing career. Midtown was part of the Team competition for Silver Dollar Stables and contested both Freestyle and Show Jumping.

Six-year-old Jozani R V F (Artie Schiller) was also a member of the Team Competition and showed in Freestyle (16th) and Dressage. The one-time winner was bred by Wendi Starritt-Graham and his female family traces directly back to multiple graded stakes winner Biogio's Rose.

Danzafied (Danza) was bred by Fox Tale Stud and won two of 26 starts for career earnings of $86,024. The 6-year-old paired with Coti Hausman Yandle to compete in Eventing (14th of 66) and Barrel Racing (15th).

The final PA-Bred competitor of 2023 was The Little Sprout (Well Spelled). The 4-year-old gray gelding earned $28,941 with two wins and was bred by Godstone Farm LLC. Junior rider Josie Frickman rode him in Dressage (finishing 33 of 82).

The Thoroughbred Makeover is both fun and inspiring for competitors and attendees alike. But what makes it even more lucrative now is that there are monetary bonuses and prizes. The PHBA's $5,000 Award ranks third of all prizes offered at the Makeover, behind only the $10,000 overall Champion and one other state. This is just one more reason why it pays to breed in Pennsylvania.

A few words from the Executive Secretary

Fantastic news for 2024! You'll see FIVE new stallions standing in PA. You can find more information in our new 2024 Stallion & Domicile Farm Directory on our website, so take a look for this upcoming breeding season. All breeders were mailed a copy in mid-December. Breed to a PA stallion and receive double the breeder awards.

The PA-Sired PA-Bred Stallion Series is being expanded to include 3yos. You should have received a letter in the mail. If you were nominated for the 2023 2yo series, you're automatically eligible as a 3yo. If you did not nominate as a 2yo, the fee will be $100 if paid before April 30, 2024, for the 3yo race in 2024. For foals of 2022, the $200 fee due by Jan. 31 will include races for 2 and 3yos. Please refer to your letter as the earlier you nominate, the cheaper the fee.

Wanamaker's digital sale will again be offered to any PHBA current members. The sale will run from Jan. 7 to Jan. 11. For more information, please go to wanamakers.com.

By now you should be familiar with the online registration system on our website. We will be transitioning to that in 2024. If you are still using a paper registration, please make sure you forward a signed copy of the Code of Ethics, which is attached to the registration form.

All broodmare domicile forms should have already been entered online for the 2024 foaling season except for public sales and breed backs. Please submit your form when your mare enters the state. These domicile reports are MANDATORY and if not completed, your foal could be denied PA-Bred registration. As usual, please contact our office with any questions you may have.

Have a Happy and Healthy 2024! Pennsylvania is the only place to Breed & Race!

PA-Bred Fund Statistics: Top Earners

January 1 through October 31, 2023

LEADING EARNERS - TOTAL AWARDS

Breeder Name	Breeder	Stallion	Total
Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC	$461,288	$174,439	$635,727
Warriors Reward	443,807	131,969	575,776
Glenn E. Brok LLC	331,475	121,650	453,126
Northview Stallion Station Inc.	0	344,814	344,814
Steven W. Young Racing LLC	244,185	93,289	337,474
Wyn Oaks Farm LLC	78,220	177,586	255,806
Blackstone Farm LLC	241,171	0	241,171
William J. Solomon VMD	133,373	88,260	221,633
Arrowwood Farm Inc.	221,391	0	221,391
Joseph Imbesi	192,890	0	192,890
St. Omer's Farm	179,600	0	179,600
Pewter Stable	146,583	28,406	174,989

Breeder Name	Breeder	Stallion	Total
Maria M. Haire	$160,481	$ 6,000	$166,481
Richard N. Miller	128,679	20,563	149,242
Michael Raymond Anspach	128,376	0	128,376
Richard Molineaux	118,321	0	118,321
Chuck Russo	93,372	21,580	114,952
Sylmar Farm Inc.	110,274	0	110,274
Social Inclusion Partners LLC	0	106,567	106,567
W M T Stables Inc.	105,433	0	105,433
Bryan B. Minnich	100,009	0	100,009
Godstone Farm LLC	98,619	0	98,619
Michael M. Moore	98,605	0	98,605
Barbara A. Rickline	84,500	11,894	96,394

LEADING STALLIONS

Fund Money includes Stallion Awards only

Stallion Name	Stallion Owner / Manager	No. of Races	Award Total
Weigelia	Wyn Oaks Farm LLC	282	$177,586
Uptowncharlybrown	Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC	430	174,439
Warrior's Reward	Warriors Reward	259	131,969
Jump Start	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	357	117,313
Social Inclusion	Social Inclusion Partners LLC	131	106,567
Uncle Lino	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	254	105,508
Peace and Justice	Steven W. Young Racing LLC	230	93,289
Talent Search	Glenn E. Brok LLC	103	79,290
Hoppertunity	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	170	70,696
Eastwood	Glenn E. Brok LLC	59	32,903
Lord Shanakill	William J. Solomon VMD	95	31,905
Winchill	Pewter Stable	54	28,406

Stallion Name	Stallion Owner / Manager	No. of Races	Award Total
Well Spelled	Godstone Farm LP	94	$26,363
El Padrino	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	81	25,624
Albert the Great	William J. Solomon VMD	40	23,451
Il Villano	Chuck Russo	34	21,580
Red Vine	DB Dojo LLC	78	20,905
Smarty Jones	Patricia L. Chapman	48	20,562
Emperor Tiberius	Richard N. Miller	52	18,211
Flashback	Gary & Mary West Stables Inc.	61	17,301
Golddigger's Boy	Luana J. Johnson	58	13,250
Last Gunfighter	William J. Solomon VMD	62	12,623
Medallist	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	43	12,128
Xixixi	Barbara A. Rickline	32	11,894

LEADING HORSES

Fund Money includes: PA-Bred Races, Breeder and Stallion Awards and PA-Bred Owner-Bonus Payments

Horse	Pedigree	Breeder	Races	Stakes	Breeder Award	Stallion Award	Bonus	Total
Twisted Ride	Great Notion - Diva's Gold	Kasey K Racing Stable Tuffy LLC	6	$116,400	$48,624	$0	$13,920	$178,944
Notice of Action *	Hoppertunity - Be a Gem	Bryan B. Minnich	3	82,800	67,920	16,080	12,000	178,800
Disco Ebo *	Weigelia - Katarica Disco	St. Omer's Farm	5	20,000	86,464	21,616	41,760	169,840
Gordian Knot *	Social Inclusion - Mia	Joseph Imbesi	4	60,000	77,584	19,396	10,560	167,540
Talented Man *	Talent Search - Musket Mary	Michael M. Moore	4	60,000	66,304	16,576	17,360	160,240
Buy Land and See	Cairo Prince - Twiggles	Joseph Imbesi	4	134,120	25,720	0	0	159,840
Veeson *	Il Villano - Springingintherein	Chuck Russo	5	51,600	64,108	14,492	13,520	143,720
Warrior's Ransom *	Warrior's Reward - Ransom Past Due	Warriors Reward	10	8,800	75,973	18,993	38,852	142,618
Aoife's Magic *	Smarty Jones - Polarized	Mohns Hill Farm LLC	2	82,800	45,120	10,680	0	138,600
Beren *	Weigelia - Silmaril	Susan C. Quick	5	29,400	54,684	13,671	28,560	126,315
Movisitor	Uncle Mo - Ristretto	Forgotten Land Investments Inc.	4	60,000	29,976	0	25,680	115,656
Neecie Marie	Cross Traffic - Lode Lady	Jon A. Marshall	5	50,400	30,408	0	27,360	108,168
Geebert *	Albert the Great - Gee Pari	Richard Molineaux	10	0	51,742	12,936	33,816	98,494
Johnny Ritt *	Weigelia - C J's Little Girl	Barbara Wheeler	9	0	52,945	13,236	31,162	97,343
Midnight in Alaska *	Almasty - Working At Night	Maria M. Haire	6	9,720	50,678	11,782	23,520	95,700
Hey Mamaluke *	Jump Start - Pu Dew	Joseph T. Capriglione	3	58,800	29,400	7,350	0	95,550
Jody's Ruby *	Talent Search - Mary Cole	Gilman Hallenbeck	3	55,200	29,010	6,906	3,960	95,076
Nice Ace	Noble Mission - A Lady With an Ace	Blackstone Farm LLC	4	60,000	27,840	0	7,200	95,040
Morning Matcha	Central Banker - Home Ice	Crane Thoroughbred Services LLC	2	77,600	15,520	0	0	93,120
Gamboling Ghost *	Weigelia - Dancingwithdebbie	Cynthia M. Bartkowski	3	54,000	30,600	7,200	0	91,800
One More Scoop *	Uncle Lino - Single Scoop	Michael Raymond Anspach	7	8,600	54,320	13,580	13,440	89,940
Mia Tosca	Animal Kingdom - Queen Scheherazade	Blackstone Farm LLC	7	57,600	24,651	0	7,216	89,467
King Kumbalay	Shanghai Bobby - Lovely Stay	Ashwell Stables Inc.	4	65,000	19,192	0	4,560	88,752
Captain Courtney	Army Mule - Mareana	Wesley R. Bennett	4	60,000	25,458	0	2,420	87,878

**Denotes PA-sired*

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL

STALLION AUCTION

JANUARY 15 THROUGH JANUARY 21

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Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024

Racing Across the Nation

Former students of South Carolina training centers found their way to the winner's circle five times between Oct. 21 and Nov. 4.

On the steeplechase front, Abaan won the Foxbrook Championship Hurdle Stakes at Far Hills, N.J., Oct. 21. The 6-year-old Abaan was a multiple stakes winner of $440,090 on the flat before beginning his second career as a steeplechaser this summer under the care of Kate Dalton in Camden. Covering 2½ miles, Abaan was relaxed before engaging the leader at the final fence. After clearing that hurdle, Abaan drew clear to win by 3 lengths.

Heavy Pour, a 2-year-old by Stormy Atlantic, finished second in his career debut Oct. 11 and then came back in 12 days to break his maiden in the Mark McDermott Stakes at Presque Isle Oct. 23. Heavy Pour stalked the leader, staying within 2 lengths of the lead, into the stretch. This graduate of Randy and Kala Rentz's breaking program gradually pulled away from the field, crossing the finish line 1½ lengths in front.

Amanda's Folly recorded her first stakes victory in the Ticonderoga during the Belmont at Aqueduct meet Oct. 29. In a courageous effort, Amanda's Folly raced as much as seven wide while chasing the leader. She dueled the length of the stretch and did not put her head in front until just before the wire, winning by a neck. Amanda's Folly learned her early lessons under the watchful eye of Donna Freyer, operator of Custom Care Equine in Camden.

Two Ghosts, a graduate of the Travis Durr Training Center, gained his first stakes victory in the Grey Stakes-G3 at Woodbine Nov. 4. Two Ghosts was making his sixth career start. We do not see this as often as we once did for 2-year-olds. Two Ghosts was eighth and last after the opening half mile. He began his move along the rail before coming five wide at the top of the stretch and surged to the wire a length in front.

On the same day, another Travis Durr graduate, Toupie, finished first in the Stewart Manor Stakes at Aqueduct. While racing in midpack for the first half mile, Toupie had to overcome some obstacles when having to steady while stuck in traffic racing down the backside. She then lost ground while behind the tiring leader approaching the sixteenth pole. In the stretch, Toupie found a clear path and headed to the finish line as much the best, winning by 2¼ lengths.

Steeplechase of Charleston penultimate meet for season

The Steeplechase of Charleston at Stono Ferry Nov. 12 was the penultimate meet for the 2023 National Steeplechase Association season. The $35,000 Alston Cup was the feature race of the day and Lightning Ridge went right to the front and never looked back. Ridden by Graham Watters, Lightning Ridge was never threatened, winning by 21 lengths. He is trained by Keri Brion and owned by KMSN Stable.

Neil Morris, who wintered in Aiken last winter, saddled Seismic Wave, winner of the Lexus Cup Handicap Hurdle by a neck. Seismic Wave is a two-time stakes winner on the flat before beginning his steeplechase career in August 2022. He is owned by William Russel and was also ridden by Graham Watters.

Fingal, winner of the training flat race, has SCTOBA connections. Fingal is owned by SCTOBA member Pierre Manigault and trained by SCTOBA member Arch Kingsley. Arch's daughter, Taylor, rode Fingal. On Nov. 18, Taylor rode a winner in Casablanca, Morocco!

Other winners included Prophets Voice in a maiden race by 6 lengths. Owned by Winflower, trained by Ricky Hendriks and ridden by Harrison Beswick, he was competing in his first race over jumps following an 18-race career on the flat in the United States and Ireland.

Outperform, saddled by SCTOBA member Richard Valentine, also won a maiden hurdle race, by a half length in his second start over jumps. He is owned by Kinross Farm and was ridden by Gerard Galligan. Outperform was a nine-time winner on the New York and Florida circuit before beginning his jump career this past October.

Aiken Fall Steeplechase completes season

The Aiken Fall Steeplechase, held Nov. 18, was the final meet of the year. Under a clear sky and warm weather, five races over hurdles were held. Sawbuck Racing's Bellarmine Hall began the day, winning the first race, a maiden hurdle event, by 1¼ lengths. He is trained by David Bourke and was ridden by Graham Watters. On the final day of the National Steeplechase season, Watters clinched the leading rider title.

Thomas Rice, a winter resident of Aiken, is the owner of the second race winner, Oscar Winner. He won

Aiken Fall *continued*

the Cathedral Aisle Handicap Hurdle by three-quarters of a length. Oscar Winner was saddled by Leslie Young, the leading trainer for the year, and was ridden by Conor Tierny, the leading apprentice rider for 2023.

Graham Watters recorded winner number two for the day when he guided Quick Master to victory in the third race. He crossed the finish line 1¼ lengths in front. Quick Master is trained by Jack Fisher and owned by Burton Street-US.

Thomas Garner was the rider and is the trainer of Mrs. S.K. Johnston Jr.'s Active Duty, winner of the Thomas Hitchcock Maiden Hurdle by 2 lengths.

The feature race, The Holiday Cup, provided Graham Watters his third win of the day riding Kingsmore to a three-quarter-length victory. Kingsmore is owned by Gregory D. Mullins and trained by Todd Wyatt.

Later that evening the Annual National Steeplechase Awards dinner was held at the Aiken County Historical Museum. Merry Maker, owned by Charleston resident Pierre Manigault and trained by Camden resident Arch Kingsley, was honored with the Lonesome Glory Award as the Horse of the Year. His signature win this year was the Lonesome Glory Hurdle Stakes-G1 run in New York in September.

South Carolina-trained winners

Horse	*Training Center*	*Date*	*Track*	*Type of Race*
Little Ni	Travis Durr Training Center	10/20/23	Delaware Park	Maiden Special Weight
Single Dot Yaht	Travis Durr Training Center	10/21/23	Keeneland	Maiden Special Weight
Agoo	Travis Durr Training Center	10/22/23	Keeneland	Maiden Special Weight
HEAVY POUR	Rentz Farm Training Center	10/23/23	Presque Isle	Mark McDermott S
Calvary Kat	Rentz Farm Training Center	10/24/23	Presque Isle	Allowance
Notice of Action	Rentz Farm Training Center	10/25/23	Parx Racing	Allowance
Abidole	Rentz Farm Training Center	10/25/23	Parx Racing	Starter Allowance
Hardspun Reason	Aiken - Cary Frommer	10/26/23	Laurel Park	Allowance
AMANDA'S FOLLY	Custom Care-D. Freyer	10/29/23	Aqueduct	Ticonderoga S
Majestic Creed	Aiken - Cary Frommer	10/30/23	Parx Racing	Allowance
Mimi's Golden Ring	Aiken - R. Hurt	10/31/23	Mountaineer	Allowance
Doctor Abbie	Rentz Farm Training Center	10/31/23	Parx Racing	Starter Allowance
Tudox Opportunity	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/01/23	Penn National	Allowance
Lucky Luke	Travis Durr Training Center	11/03/23	Zia Park	Allowance
TWO GHOSTS	Travis Durr Training Center	11/04/23	Woodbine	Grey S-G3
TOUPIE	Travis Durr Training Center	11/04/23	Aqueduct	Stewart Manor Memorial S
Animal Kingston	Aiken - Neil Morris	11/04/23	Callaway Gardens	Handicap Hurdle
Ratatat	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/06/23	Mahoning Valley	Allowance
Glory Bound Clara	Travis Durr Training Center	11/08/23	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Missing Fortune	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/08/23	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Kingdom Queen	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/08/23	Penn National	Allowance
Plus Sized Courage	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/08/23	Parx Racing	Maiden Special Weight
If We Get Lucky	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/08/23	Penn National	Starter Allowance
Private Creed	Aiken - Mason Springs	11/09/23	Churchill Downs	Allowance
Fun Nation	Aiken - A. White	11/09/23	Laurel Park	Allowance
Foles Notion	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/09/23	Laurel Park	Allowance
Paula's Surprise	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/09/23	Penn National	Maiden Special Weight
Tenenbaum	Travis Durr Training Center	11/10/23	Churchill Downs	Maiden Special Weight
Calculated Lux	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/10/23	Charles Town	Maiden Special Weight
Lou Anna	McCutchen Training Center	11/11/23	Churchill Downs	Maiden Special Weight
Coracle	Travis Durr Training Center	11/12/23	Laurel Park	Maiden Special Weight
Seismic Wave	Aiken - Neil Morris	11/12/23	Charleston Steeplechase	Starter Handicap
Tekila	Travis Durr Training Center	11/13/23	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Timelight Dancer	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/13/23	Parx Racing	Maiden Special Weight
Danzanitaway	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/13/23	Mahoning Valley	Maiden Special Weight
Alternate Reality	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/14/23	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Answer the Call	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/14/23	Remington Park	Maiden Special Weight
Writer's Regret	Travis Durr Training Center	11/15/23	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Furious Anger	Aiken - R. Hurt	11/17/23	Churchill Downs	Maiden Special Weight
Caribbean Pleasure	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/17/23	Charles Town	Allowance
Go to the Kingdom	Travis Durr Training Center	11/18/23	Laurel Park	Allowance
Cat's Cave	McCutchen Training Center	11/18/23	Churchill Downs	Starter Allowance
Wortherweightingold	Rentz Farm Training Center	11/20/23	Mahoning Valley	Allowance

VIRGINIA

COLONIAL DOWNS TO RACE 27 SUMMER DATES IN 2024; ARLINGTON MILLION & OTHER KEY STAKES TO RETURN

Colonial Downs' request for 27 summer race dates in 2024 was approved unanimously at the Virginia Racing Commission's December 6 meeting. The New Kent track will host a nine-week campaign next year from July 11 - September 7 with racing every Thursday thru Saturday, mirroring last year's campaign with one notable exception — post time. First race will depart the gate at 1:30 PM Thursdays and Saturdays while a twilight card will be held at 4:30 PM on Fridays. Gary Palmisano Jr., Executive Director of Racing for Churchill Downs Incorporated (CDI), noted that Thursday's post could potentially change to 4:30 PM as well but only after discussions with horsemen to determine how back-to-back late day finishes could affect operations especially with shippers.

Colonial's two marquee events held last summer will return in the same format and time frame in 2024. The highly successful "Festival of Racing" — which featured the Grade 1 Arlington Million and Beverly D in addition to the Grade 2 Secretariat Stakes — will be held Saturday August 10 while the 21st running of the Grade 3 Virginia Derby, complemented by a stakes-filled under card, will close out the meet on Saturday September 7. Purse levels for all major stakes are expected to remain the same as last year.

"The success of the 2023 meet, which brought weekend racing back to Colonial Downs, was a credit to the tremendous support here in Virginia from the owners, trainers, horseplayers, hard-working staff, and partners," said Colonial's Senior Director of Racing Operations Frank Hopf. "We're excited to build upon the momentum and look forward to a tremendous 2024 season."

Palmisano noted some accomplishments of the 2023 meet — which was the first one under CDI's stewardship. Total handle for 27-day meet was a healthy $72 million. Handle for "Festival of Racing" day itself was $9.95 million and featured an on-track crowd of 6,300 people that wagered $240,000. Eleven horses that competed at the Colonial meet went on to race in the Breeders' Cup Championships including Da Hoss Stakes winner Nobals who prevailed in the Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint.

The top three finishers in the 2023 Virginia Derby all went on to record graded stakes wins in their next starts. Integration, the Derby winner who also won a Colonial maiden special weight four weeks prior, remains undefeated courtesy of an impressive five length win in the Grade 2 Hill Prince at Aqueduct November 18. Derby runner-up Program Trading captured his second Grade 1 score in the December 2 Hollywood Derby. The Lope de Vegas ridgling previously won the Grade 1 Saratoga Derby Invitational Stakes. Third place Derby finisher Runaway Storm was best in the Grade 3 Bryan Station Stakes at Keeneland October 28.

Business remains brisk at the Rosies HHR Gaming Emporiums located around the state including the newest site in Emporia which opened in September. A total of 2,790 terminals are in operation at the seven gaming centers and total handle for the year will exceed $4 billion. A new Rosies resort in Dumfries, which will house 1,000 HHR terminals, will replace the current 150-terminal location there in mid-2024. As a result, up to 40 thoroughbred race days could be offered in 2025.

VRC Chair Stephanie Nixon with outgoing Virginia HBPA Executive Director Frank Petramalo (VEA photo).

LONGTIME HBPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FRANK PETRAMALO SET TO RETIRE DECEMBER 31

Frank Petramalo, longtime Executive Director of the Virginia HBPA, announced he will be retiring at the end of the year. He will be replaced by Glen Berman who served as Illinois Thoroughbred Horsemen's Director and General Counsel from 2009-2016 and most recently, as head of the Florida HBPA.

Petramalo served on Virginia's HBPA Board from 2001-2005 and took over as Executive Director in his final year. A native of Rochester, New York, he was introduced to racing at a young age betting harness races at nearby Batavia Downs. "Everyone in the neighborhood was crazy about playing races there," he said. "I remember winning my first daily double on a 5-5 combination that paid $18 and was hooked instantly."

Petramalo bought his first horse in 1995 from Virginia horsewoman Diana McClure and

Virginia Derby winner Integration is a perfect 3-for-3 in his career (Coady Photography).

they turned it into a steeplechaser. McClure acquired the horse from Billy Turner, who was trainer of the legendary Seattle Slew. Petramalo has owned jump horses ever since.

Highlights from Petramalo's HBPA stint read like a history of Virginia racing. He played a lead role in many accomplishments and victories. Included in the lengthy list: Ensuring that a percent of a track's live race signal sales are directed to horsemen, legalizing Advance Deposit Wagering (ADW) in Virginia, increasing the number of OTBs that Colonial Downs can operate from six to ten, increasing the percent of ADW handle that goes to the track and horsemen, formation of the Virginia Equine Alliance (VEA), legislating a source market fee that helps fund the VEA and enabled it to open four OTBs while Colonial Downs was shuttered, and to enact legislation that allows Historical Horse Racing (HHR) in the state — which led to the reopening of Colonial in 2019 and a new era of higher purse levels and quality racing.

"Virginia racing had always been small on the radar screen," said Petramalo. "The most we ever raced in New Kent was a 45-day meet in 2008 which took place over nine weeks. The HBPA got involved in some cutting edge and very interesting stuff over the past couple decades though. In 2001, the horsemen had a contract with Colonial and weren't getting a dime on the sale of the Colonial simulcast signal. They needed horsemen's approval to race so in 2002, we negotiated a deal and for the first time, horsemen got 50% of host fees."

"The HBPA got involved in lobbying and was very successful. In cooperation with the track, increasing the amount of OTBs to ten was huge," he added. "Keep in mind these were the old days and financing purses came from year-round wagering at the OTBs. We worked a partnership agreement with Colonial and from that, set up a matrix to determine the number of live race days each year. We set a daily purse goal of $200,000 a day and based on how much was in the purse account, figured out how many days we could run."

The formation of VEA in 2015 was key to bringing racing back to Virginia. "That was solely Debbie Easter's idea," said Petramalo. "We put together a horsemen's organization after Colonial shut down and moved forward as a non-profit corporation. We developed a four-way partnership and went back to the legislature to propose that the five percent source market fee of wagers that went to Colonial should go to the VEA. It became a direct funding mechanism and has worked out great. The VEA opened up OTBs as a result which was totally unprecedented."

Later that year, the VEA ran a harness meet in Nelson County (south of Charlottesville) and in 2016, opened Shenandoah Downs in Woodstock which begins its ninth season of standardbred racing on April 6. In 2017, Larry Lucas, who had been Board Chairman of Youbet.com, met with Petramalo and Stephanie Nixon about his group's desire to buy Colonial Downs. In order to move forward, they needed to get legislation in place that allowed HHR. He asked the HBPA to support the cause.

"We worked closely with Larry's people and lo and behold, legislation was enacted to enable HHR. We negotiated a revenue sharing agreement and the VEA's four member groups share in the HHR revenue. Nobody expected HHR to be as lucrative as it has turned out to be."

This year, over $4 billion will be wagered on 2,790 HHR terminals in play at seven Rosie's Gaming Emporium locations acrosss the state.

"We started out at purse levels of $200,000 a day and with the HHR revenue sharing agreement, were over $690,000 a day this year. We paid out $18.7 million in purses in 2023 and 75% of that came from HHR revenue. The trajectory is going forward and upwards."

Petramalo hands the torch off to Berman on January 1 and leaves the industry in an enviable spot. "I think it's a nice position to be in. Virginia is one of the few states where racing's future looks pretty good as far as increasing days and purses. Glen should be a perfect fit here. Where else can you have an opportunity to do something positive versus handling damage control."

There will be challenges to tackle in the near future, mainly in the expansion of gaming. "That is something I never expected," said Petramalo. "When I came to Virginia you couldn't shop on Sundays, but things change of course. The state put its foot in the water with HHR followed by

Set Piece wins the Grade 1 Arlington Million at Colonial Downs in 2023 (Coady Photography).

sports gambling, fantasy games and casinos. There are currently four casinos being built with a fifth one coming at some point. Legislation is pending to allow grey machines to come back to the extent they will be taxed and regulated. They are a huge competitor for us. We'll all be keeping our fingers crossed that HHR continues to sustain itself and can compete with other forms of gaming."

Petramalo said he will miss working with various Boards to help better the racing business. "I served under two HBPA presidents — Robin Richards and David Ross — and a number of Board members like Donna Dennehy, Jill Gordon-Moore and Susie Chatfield-Taylor who are all very good and very smart people. Same with the other HBPA Board members that have been there for a long time. It's been a real pleasure to have worked with them. It's a group of horsemen so you'll always hear different opinions, but they made working there a lot of fun."

Asked if he'll miss being involved in racing on a day-to-day basis, Petramalo admitted that he will. "During the meet, I spend most of my time on the backstretch. The time between 6 and 10 AM on the backside is the most enjoyable part of the racing experience. There are a lot of characters working back there that make the day fun and interesting. There is great satisfaction in being able to help grooms. The people there work seven days a week and the pay is pretty low. We provided medical, dental and optical care for folks back there. Dental care was very important - we spent $45,000 last year in dental bills alone. Satisfaction comes from helping folks who could really benefit," he added. "They are pleased as punch that you are helping them. They are very nice people. The part I won't miss though is being away from home in New Kent for three solid months and coming home only on Sundays."

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West Virginia
THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION
Newsletter January 2024

Personal West Virginia highlights in 2023

By Jeff Gilleas

Fortunately, in 2023, we didn't have to deal with a full blown pandemic; however racing still suffered from a recession and skyrocketing inflation. Many farms were forced to adapt their business models to focus on profit more than growth, while trainers seemed to prioritize spending, hoping to differentiate themselves from their competitors.

On the racetrack quality equine performances, by West Virginia-bred or -sired runners, graced the headlines, affirming the sustained ascendancy of the local product. The following is a list of subjective awards honoring those who stimulated my journalistic juices.

BEST CHAMPIONSHIP PERFORMANCE

Coastal Mission, a son of Great Notion out of Smart Crowd, is a full brother to Lewisfield, but is now one-up on his dynamic Mid-Atlantic sibling, by winning beyond the comfort zone of 6 or 7 furlongs.

The rangy gelding owned by Coleswood Farm (Jeff and Susan Runco), manhandled the opposition on WV Breeders Classics in the 1⅛-mile feature, but his win in the Russell Road Stakes on Charles Town Classic evening was genuinely epic.

Bred by his owner, Coastal Mission not only ran a career best Beyer number of 114 in the $250,000 wide-open stakes, but in victory foiled horses trained by Hall of Fame conditioners Steve Asmussen and Bill Mott.

RISING STAR AWARD

Direct the Cat's eye-dropping maiden special weight score in August was no fluke as she followed up that effort with commanding wins in the Rachel's Turn, WV Triple Crown Nutrition Breeders Classic and James and Eleanor Casey Memorial.

Bred by John McKee, and owned/trained by his wife Cyndy, the fluid daughter of Redirect out of Cat Thats Grey celebrates a unique marriage of equine athleticism and human camaraderie. The 2-year-old filly is her sire's first winner and predicted to be a universal choice as champion in her division.

ACHIEVEMENT OF THE YEAR AWARD-TIE

Tiz the Reason has only been off the board twice in 2023 (through early-December) and that was when the daughter of Bullsbay out of Some Say tried stakes competition. When she participates against analogous company, the Leslie Condon-bred is the picture of consistency.

Owned by Kenneth Brown and trained by his brother, Ronney, the 4½-furlong specialist sports seven wins, one second and two thirds in 13 outings. The slender gray is exemplary at the starting gate and her ability to run the turn from the quarter pole to the top of the stretch is her blueprint for success.

Never Compromise should be the avatar for horse racing infomercials depicting strength and honor. Claimed in January for $6,250 by Ray Pennington III, the son of Graydar out of Ghost Canyon was revitalized by trainer Ollie Figgins III.

Bred by John McKee, the dark bay with protruding ankles went on to record eight wins, one second and one third in 12 starts for team Figgins.

SIXTH MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Since the 1980s, the National Basketball Association has acknowledged the best performing player coming off the bench. In 2023, no horse gave more of himself and positively changed the course of his proprietor than 3-year-old **Little Roo Roo**. Wins in the Coin Collector, It's Only Money, and Robert G. Leavitt Memorial Stake paralleled the rising progression of trainer Michael E Jones Jr.

Bred by Sherwood Bryant, the son of Limehouse out of Pepper Bay has been good karma for Mike Jones whose style is to lead by example.

TEAM AWARD OF THE YEAR

Certain animals weave their way into our heart at specific moments

to enhance our lives. **Jefferson Native**, a son of Officer Rocket out of Absolutelygorgeous, was the unsung hero for owner Tony Stehr and his wife, trainer Linda Dollinger-Stehr. It's a story that plays out 24-7, 365 days a year, as the hard-working couple tend to their modest band of runners. With relative opportunities available, the twosome supplement their income by operating a morning and evening pony business.

Jefferson Native was bred by Bybee Road Farm and his win in the $75,000 Last Enchantment Stakes was his ultimate accomplishment of 2023.

DON'T GIVE UP AWARD

Training racehorses is a minefield of challenges. You might assume that once you've passed a certain age, hitting your personal best is impossible. The 5-year-old mare **Someday Is Today** serves as the secret weapon for accepting the mind-game challenge.

Talent has never been her problem, it was temperament that held the daughter of Carpe Diem out of Any Day Now from reaching elite status. Owned by Andrew Warren and trained by Anthony Farrior, the chippy chestnut has discovered that leaving the paddock early, and not joining the post parade until late, keeps her anxiety levels to a minimum. Back-to-back victories in the Roger Ramey Breeders Classic Distaff and My Sister Pearl Stakes speak to the exceptional year for breeder Schiano Racing.

PHOTO OF THE YEAR

In racing, a "dead heat" is a situation where two or more horses cross the finish line at the same time. It is a rarity considering the sophistication of the photo finish camera equipment, but on Sept. 29 in the Henry Mercer Memorial for 2-year-olds, King Kontie and Jubawithatwist could not be separated.

King Kontie is by Karakontie out of Jumelle Springs, and Jubawithatwist is a son of Juba out of Romantic Cork. The two state-breds are very familiar with each other having made up the exacta in multiple freshman stakes events.

INSPIRATIONAL AWARD OF THE YEAR

Penguin Power may be a card carrying member of AARP, but the ageless wonder can still successfully compete against younger foes. The son of Fiber Sonde out of Aye Robbin had enough pep left in his step at age 8 to register a win at 4½ furlongs in the WV Dash for Cash Stakes.

Bred by John McKee, owned by David Raim and trained by Jeff Runco, the winner of almost $600,000 is proof that a structured fitness program and love of the game can dramatically prolong a career.

MVP AWARD

"You see a horse with your eyes but you feel them with your soul."

Some horses allow us to pick up the pieces and participate in life again. **Hessica**, a daughter of Juba out of Stefani's Surprise, and consecutive victress of the esteemed WV Cavada Breeders Classic Stakes is just such a vehicle for owner/trainer Kristy Petty. Kristy, who lost her partner John Casey earlier in 2023, is also the proud breeder of record.

West Virginia Thoroughbred Breeders Association

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Some of the best incentives in the nation!

- A minimum of three accredited races are written every day at Charles Town exclusively for registered WV-bred and/or -sired horses.
- West Virginia has the only program in the country that permits horses to win state-bred races that do not count against the horse's lifetime open conditions.
- The WV Thoroughbred Development Fund distributes over $4.5 million to breeders, owners, and stallion owners of accredited WV-bred and/or -sired horses based the horse's annual earnings at Charles Town and Mountaineer Park racetracks.
- The West Virginia Breeders Classics pays out almost $1 million in purses for WV-bred and/or -sired horses. It is held annually on the second Saturday in October.
- $800,000 in purses are allocated for up to 16 WV accredited stakes races during the year.
- Supplemental Purse Awards of up to 10% of the winner's share of the purse to the owner, breeder, and/or sire owner of the accredited WV-bred and/or -sired winner.
- West Virginia offers year-round racing with approximately 300 race days per year.

Chasing
Brought to you by the Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase Foundation

Trip of a Lifetime

TGSF Developing Rider program participants report on 2023 Ireland trip

By Betsy Burke Parker

They learned a lot, laughed a lot and rode a lot.

And it rained a lot.

But they wouldn't trade it for the world.

This according to the participants in a Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase Foundation training trip to Ireland, after they returned from a week of immersive study on the Irish steeplechase circuit.

However much they disliked the constant drizzle-to-downpours, Camille deStanley, Scarlet Davies and Sophie O'Brien say they loved everything else about the opportunity, and all of them say they plan to pay it forward to the American jump circuit.

They were selected for an all-expenses paid training trip to Ireland, the culmination of a competitive application process that included an essay and references from U.S. industry insiders.

The three young riders traveled to Ireland with U.S. circuit rep and trip facilitator Regina Welsh for the July 22-Aug. 1 trip, a week of hands-on learning from the sport's top trainers and riders.

The training trips started in 2014, sponsored by the TGSF and supported by the NSA and hosts Sam Slater and wife Lornie Forbes. Welsh says that by exposing young American horsemen and women to "the way it's done" in the birthplace of the sport, the domestic circuit benefits from a world of enrichment.

In short, it's a cool opportunity, and one that's worked well, Welsh adds.

Sophie, Scarlet and Camille pictured with jockey Sean Flanagan at the Galway Festival

Former TGSF president Sam Slater and his wife, Lornie Forbes, hosted the group at their Cahervillahow estate in County Tipperary for most of their stay, the first day spent at Charles Noell's Arbraccan House. "Everything was so wonderful," Davies says.

"We did so many amazing things on this trip. I can't thank the TGSF enough for making it all possible," adds deStanley.

"Each morning we went to a different trainer's yard and rode sets. Every trainer did something a little different;" while there were lots of similarities to American training and racing, there were plenty of differences.

Camille deStanley (Age 19, Leesburg, Virginia) – She's now back at Bridgewater College in central Virginia for her sophomore year, riding on the club equestrian team and heading home to Leesburg to show and foxhunt on weekends.

"In the afternoons we (toured) places like Coolmore and the National Stud as well as going to racecourses like Limerick and Gowran Park.

"We ended the trip at the Galway Races, and it was just incredible.

"One of the main differences between UK and U.S. training is the 'road work.' It's definitely different from anything I've done over here.

"A lot of the places were just so massive and they had so many horses there were so many things going on. On the other hand, some things stay the same though – tackrooms and people are much the same.

"A lot of the horses were fancier, and worth way more than anything I'd sat on before! They were just amazing.

"The people were mostly the same (as at home), and everyone I talked to was very nice.

"We got to meet so many amazing people it's hard to pick who I think is the coolest. If I have to choose, I think Paddy Mullins, Willie's son, is probably one of the coolest people I've ever met. It was amazing to talk to him because he's still actively a jockey while also being an assistant trainer. He has so much insight to both riding and training.

"He came up to us after our last set and had a conversation with each of us. He was just so genuine.

"We got to watch him ride a bumper at Limerick: it was an absolute masterclass.

"While it was a bit of a long trip – I was so tired by the end, it was also way too short. I'd go back in a heartbeat. Irish racing is a

league above anything else."

Scarlet Davies (Age 17, Monkton, Maryland) – She's now back home in Monkton, riding horses for and with her parents, Joe and Blythe Miller Davies, and a senior at Notre Dame Prep in Towson.

"The trip was amazing – I was happy to get home but also sad to leave!

"I think it rained every day, but I'm told that was normal. We didn't mind.

"We rode out for Shark Hanlon, Enda Bolger, Jessica Harrington, Gordon Elliott, Pat Doyle and Willie Mullins. They were all so kind and accommodating.

"At Bolger's, we just popped off and galloped over about 15 or 20 fences! That was a real highlight.

"Sets varied in size, but the biggest was probably Jessica Harrington with close to 50 in one set!

"I was impressed by many things, but mostly by the professionalism and level of passion they all have for the sport. It seems to be a part of the fabric of their culture.

"The horses were much stronger than the ones I'd ridden here – I was only run off with one time when I passed a few horses at Shark's.

"No one seemed too concerned.

"The people were all so friendly, thanks to Regina, who has a great relationship with everyone.

"My favorite parts were the school at Enda Bolger's, meeting (English Grand National winner) Rachael Blackmore, and getting to know the Doyle and Hanlon families who went way out of their way to accommodate us.

"I am looking forward to riding a few flat races and possibly some ladies timber races back home, but after meeting Rachael and seeing their jockey colony in action, I have no illusions that I would ever want to be a professional steeplechase rider at least for now.

"I just can't thank Regina, the Slaters, Mr. Noell, the TGSF and all our hosts enough for the trip of a lifetime."

Sophie O'Brien (Age 18, Sparks, Maryland) - She's back home in Sparks, and headed to college. She'll get on horses for trainer Joe Davies before class this term.

"On the first night we slept at Charlie Noelle's house which was just an amazing experience - it was so cool to explore. The rest of the week we stayed at the Slaters' home, I am so thankful for them to have

The group with Sam Slater and Lornie Forbes at the Coolmore Stud, generally acknowledged to be the world's biggest, and best, Thoroughbred racehorse breeding operation.

welcomed us for the week.

"We rode each morning at a different yard. My favorite was definitely Enda Bolger. I learned a bunch from him and got to school over jumps which was so much fun.

"The main difference I found was limited turn-out. Another thing was that they only do legs-up, no mounting block.

"The barns were definitely different than ours - more courtyard style rather than (center aisle.)

"The coolest person I met was probably Rachael Blackmore. I've grown up hearing about her all the time and admiring her passion. It was very cool to see her ride in person.

"Something that stuck with me, hearing it from a lot of different people, is 'to keep going.' They explained that they've gone through ups and downs and bad years. Seeing that all these (successful) trainers and jockeys went through challenges to get where they are will definitely stick with me and make me want to keep going."

The 2023 TGSF Ireland trip participants with 2022 Eclipse winner HEWICK, at Shark Hanlon's barn.

Regina Welsh – They call her the facilitator

Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase Foundation: "Lucky you, involved at the management level of these developing riders since it started. Tell us how it went down, way back in 2014."

Regina Welsh: "When Sam Slater was the president of the Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase Foundation, he came to me with the idea of taking young riders to Ireland to experience what Irish racing is like and asked me to take the reins.

"Fast-forward (seven years) to this summer, and we are about to take the sixth group over, a total of 21 young riders who've received a significant racing experience.

"Without Sam and his wife Lornie, this trip would absolutely not be possible.

Tisa Della-Volpe photo of Welsh, who as director of US Pony Racing is typically seen with a gaggle of children around her.

"They sponsor it under the arm of the TGSF and the majority of the trip is spent at Sam's family home in Tipperary. All of the riders have gotten to know Nellie, the house manager, who particularly likes meeting all of the young talent from America.

"Riders who have gone on previous trips have really benefited from the experience. Look at last year's group: Taylor Kingsley went back to Ireland to work for (trainer) Shark Hanlon, and even rode a winner in a bumper for him this past spring.

"(Champion trainer Leslie Young and multiple champion rider Paddy Young's son,) Tom Young was working for Gordon Elliott as a barn manager.

"And the trip gave (race manager Toby Edwards' daughter) Eliza Edwards wings to pursue opportunities in England.

"The trainers that they work with were so generous and gracious with their time in instruction – Patrick Mullins, Sean Flanagan, Rachael Blackmore, Danny Mullins, Darragh O'Connor, just to name a few of the riders to share their experiences with the gang."

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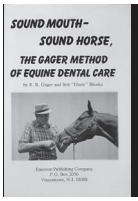

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— Looking Back —

10 years ago

■ Holly Robinson was honored with the inaugural Joe Kelly Unsung Hero Award. "I've never been so shocked in my whole life," said the 62-year-old Maryland trainer.

The nomination letter from Rosie Napravnik said it best: "I have never known a person to be so generous, caring, supporting, and loving just because it is a good thing to do. And she does it all with a sense of humor and humility. If she can help, she does. There never seems to be a concern of her convenience. She selflessly does any and everything she can for somebody in need. Holly never, ever asks or wants to be credited for any of her efforts. She enjoys the reward of success stories and happy endings."

■ Maryland-bred star Ben's Cat recorded his 19th stakes win when he captured the $250,000 Fabulous Strike Handicap at Penn National. King T. Leatherbury's homebred son of former Maryland stallion Parker's Storm Cat won the inaugural running the year before. It was the final start of his 7-year-old campaign. He was on the board in all eight starts in 2013.

Ben's Cat returned in 2014 to add a third Fabulous Strike victory.

■ Toni Kirwan was becoming well known for her creativity in naming her horses, including a few doozies. Many paid homage to her broodmare Blitzen's Echo: Blitzensbuzzwiserr (by Buzzards Bay), Blitzenshoneybare (Gators N Bears), Blitzensdiscogetem (Disco Rico), Blitzenstekkldpink (Tekken-Ire) and Blitzensmajikreign (StreetMagician). A new source of inspiration was the broodmare Extra Sexy Psychic, whose first foal, 2-year-old Extrasexyhippzster, won a $63,720 maiden special weight at Parx.

■ The University of Maryland sold the first two horses born at the College Park campus in 30 years at the Fasig-Tipton December mixed sale. Weanlings Amazin Terp and Diamondback Fire were foaled and raised largely by students in the equine studies classes, spearheaded by equine science and management professor, Dr. Amy Burk. Consignor Bill Reightler waived the commissions and fees to help the program and noted, "The horses were prepared wonderfully . . . they did a good job getting the horses ready."

50 years ago

■ "Racing stable replaces Romper Room for Nancy and Bert Claster" was the headline, as the Clasters' stable, trained by Charlie Lewis, continued to grow. It was a new venture for the Baltimore couple, who in the early 1950s "decided that a good educational program for preschoolers was needed," created *Romper Room* with the ever-enthusiastic nursery school teacher "Miss Nancy," and saw it catch on with young children.

After going to the tracks for many years, the couple bought their first racehorse, 3-year-old filly Wear a Red Rose, for $4,000 in 1972, and watched her win six of her first eight starts. In 1973, the Clasters won their first stakes with Mountain Eagle, a horse they claimed at Pimlico.

"Just owning our own horses has been a lot of fun for us," said Bert Claster. "We've always worked together and now we have a sport we can enjoy together."

Tuscalee, far right with Joy Ketts aboard, enjoying a day out foxhunting with Marlboro Hunt Club.

■ Hurdle champion Tuscalee enjoyed a new life in the hunting field after a steeplechase career. Considered a small horse for steeplechase racing – the Maryland-bred was an even 16 hands and weighed 1,000 pounds – Tuscalee was ridden in 80 percent of his races by Joe Aitcheson Jr., started 80 times, won 37 races, earned $129,022, and was hurdle division champion in 1964, brush division champion in 1966 and 1970, hurdle and brush champion in 1971, and steeplechase Horse of the Year in 1966. Alfred H. Smith Sr.'s 14-year-old homebred champion was being foxhunted by the owner's 13-year-old granddaughter Joy Ketts.

"He is a different horse now, loves the children and has a whole new way of life," Smith said.

Tuscalee, who set steeplechase records for the most wins in a single year (10) and career (37), was inducted into the National Racing Hall of Fame in 2013.

■ Maryland-bred Preakness winner Bee Bee Bee was retired and sold by owner Will Farish to Japanese interests to stand at stud. The 5-year-old son of Better Bee became the seventh Maryland-bred to win Maryland's classic when taking the 1972 running over a sloppy track.

75 years ago

■ The death of William L. Brann's *Challenger II two days before Christmas was a blow to Maryland's breeding industry. The 21-year-old Glade Valley Farm stallion had been in poor health for some time – earlier in the summer he had a severe case of colic, followed by another in the fall. He was slow to recuperate from the attacks, and their effects, coupled with a failing heart, led to his death.

One of England's leading 2-year-olds in 1929, the son of Swynford arrived in the U.S. in 1930 following the death of his owner, Lord Dewar. A racing career in the States was thwarted by a training accident; his first foals came to the races in 1935. With no crop larger than 33 registered foals, he was the nation's leading sire in 1939 and consistently ranked in the top 20. His best offspring were two-time Horse of the Year Challedon, a 1936 colt whose accomplishments included the 1939 Preakness Stakes and back-to-back runnings of the Pimlico Special (1939, 1940), and champion daughter Gallorette, sixth on the all-time list of American horses with earnings of $445,535. And he was the grandsire of champion Conniver.

■ Frank Adair "Downey" Bonsal was Maryland's leading trainer of 1948, winning 59 races and $125,000. His big horse, H. L. Straus' Pilaster, won nine of 20 starts, including four stakes.

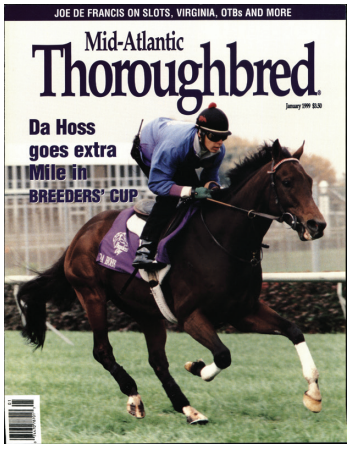
Bonsal was born to be a horseman, coming from two prominent families that included Redmonds, Lurmans and Stewarts on his mother's side, and his father, Frank A. Bonsal Sr., founded the Harford Hunt prior to World War I.

As to what made a good horse, he said "its heart," adding there was a day when he thought he could select a good horse on conformation, but he's "been fooled too often" and expressed no special fondness for clean legs, sloping shoulders or powerful quarters. "I like 'em whatever their shape – if they can run."

■ Racing dates requested by the New Jersey tracks for 1949 indicated a commendable disinclination to run into conflicts with Maryland tracks, which did nobody any good in 1948. But the complicated scheduling in the region was revealed with the proposed plan to have Monmouth open June 20 and provide fall racing into early October, but not race during the lucrative August dates. Atlantic City and Garden State Park both wanted to race from late August to late September. Factor in Delaware Park and Havre de Grace, and Joe Palmer noted: "It's a case of too many tracks in too small an area, of course, and perhaps of too many days at the meetings."

■ From Humphrey Finney's The Editor's Saddle-Bag: December 11 – "Took the train early this morning for Orange, Virginia, there to look over the growing and highly productive stud that Marion duPont Scott has developed at historic Montpelier.

"We saw three stallions, the good staying Bolingbroke, a relative newcomer; old Annapolis, a good sire of jumpers and a good performer for Mrs. Scott himself; and the Grand National winner Battleship, who is also making his mark. The great little son of Man o' Was is in great fettle, is getting some fine mares and is breeding well."



25 years ago

■ Breeders' Cup XV, at Churchill Downs, saw a wagering record for the 10-race card and boasted the largest crowd in Breeders' Cup history (80,452). Numerous Eclipse Awards were decided, but Tim Capps noted that "One that probably won't win an Eclipse for the winner, but will perhaps be the best remembered of the day, was that of Da Hoss in the Breeders'Cup Mile-G1."

Trained by Michael Dickinson at his Tapeta facility in North East, Md., Da Hoss won the same race at Woodbine in 1996. Reported Capps: ". . . the 6-year-old gelding by Gone West had been on the injury and ailment shelf since that time. He, in fact, did not start in1997at all, and was a source of almost constant concern (to Dickinson) throughout 1998. Hock, fetlock and stifle problems beset him, and as late as six weeks before Breeders' Cup day, Dickinson was ready to give up."

After nearly two years on the sidelines, Da Hoss resurfaced at Colonial Downs in a $30,000 allowance Oct. 11, less than a month before the Breeders' Cup. Dickinson said the race, which Da Hoss won over future Grade 1 winner John's Call, had nothing to do with conditioning. "I wasn't concerned about having a race. I just wanted the committee [the Breeders' Cup selection committee] to know he was alive and well."

Owned by Prestonwood Farm and Wallstreet Racing Stables, Da Hoss won by a head over Hawksley Hill (Ire). Said rider John Velazquez, "It was unbelievable. He wanted to win so bad, he just didn't want to get beat."

■ Flat Top emerged as the brightest steeplechase star of 1998 after winning three consecutive races in October and November. Nancy Gerry's 5-year-old son of Alleged trained by Janet Elliot nailed down his Eclipse Award with victories in two Grade 1 races – the Breeders' Cup Grand National, followed by the Colonial Cup. Elliot took the title as leading trainer by money won. Sanna Neilson won by number of wins.

The champion jockey of the year was Sean Clancy. Wrote his brother Joe: "In 10 seasons as a steeplechase jockey Sean Clancy had fallen on his head enough times to get eight concussions, won 101 career races, piloted Grade1 winners To Ridley and Rowdy Irishman and watched a slew of other jockeys make champion jockey speeches. Clancy, 28, finally got to speak in 1998."

The First

Top Bid gets outfitted after winning the inaugural Colonial Cup International Steeplechase at South Carolina's Springdale Race Course in 1970. Shelved since 2018, the race will return for its 49th running in November as a Grade 1 with a $150,000 purse.

Bred by the Phipps family's Wheatley Stable, Top Bid finished third in three Saratoga stakes as a 2-year-old in 1966 and won six races on the flat, including the 1967 Woodlawn Stakes at Pimlico. Transferred to trainer Mikey Smithwick and a new career for owner Lillian Phipps, the son of Olympia won 14 times over jumps and was named champion steeplechaser of 1970.

Peter Winants was on staff at *The Maryland Horse* during the 1960s, writing and taking photographs for the magazine before heading to Virginia where he headed up *The Chronicle of the Horse* magazine and later the National Sporting Library. Before his death in 2009, he gifted his prints on file at the MHBA, which have become part of the Maryland Horse Library as The Winants Collection.

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